

The Boy who stole my Bra

by Princess Rosalina fanboy15

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Summary: Picture this: You wake up in the middle of the night, swamped in your Fnaf covers and completely and utterly groggy . You hear a sound, so you sit up and turn your lamp on, and that's when you see it. Your new neighbour, clambering halfway through your wi

## 1. What the Actual Fuck?

\*\*\_Ch 1: What the Actual F\*\*?\_\*\*

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><p><strong><em>Cast<em>\*\*

\_\*\* Rosalina Lynn Star\*\*\_

\*\*\_Danielle ''Pauline'' Verducci\_\*\*

\*\*\_Cosmo Star (Mom)\_\*\*

\*\*\_Mike Star (Dad)\_\*\*

\*\*\_Blayne Steven Moonlight\_\*\*

\*\*\_Autumn Alexandra Moonlight\_\*\*

\*\*\_Eulyric Lillian Moonlight\_\*\*

\*\*\_Mario Mario Star\_\*\*

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><p><strong><em>Rosalina's POV.<em>\*\*

\*\*"Mario wins again!"\*\*

I watch through narrowed eyes as my eight year old brother catapults around the room in victory, lifting his shirt over his head to reveal his pale torso. What is it with boys and showing their chest when they win something? Is it some warped form of dominance display, originated from our monkey ancestors? I snort unattractively at the thought, before rolling my eyes at my loopy brother. My hands dart out to trap his waist in my grasp, and I pull him to my lap to tickle him. "You wish, little brother," I tease him playfully; "We all know I kicked your ass on the other games."

Mario squirms hastily to free himself from my torturous hold, shooting me a look as he does so. I smile smugly in return: Yoshi always wins and he knows it.

"Rosalina, come down here please!" Mom shouts from downstairs, releasing a small sigh from me. Reluctantly, I swing my legs from my comfy spot in the bean bag and follow my brother downstairs, knowing full well that by the time my aching legs have gotten back up here, he will have stolen my place. Ugh, sibling rivalry. As soon as I've entered the kitchen, I'm hit with the heart-warmingly familiar aroma that is mom's cooking. She's always loved to bake and I've always loved caffeine, therefore totalling in a kitchen that constantly smells like the interior of a Starbucks store. Not that I'm complaining, honestly.

I turn to mom herself, who's icing a batch of pink lemonade cupcakes at the moment. She glances up as I head over, offering me a sugar-dusted smile. In one fluid movement, she leans back and dusts her palms on her apron. "Hey sweetie. Come and have a look at this!" She leads me over to the window, pulling back the plaid curtains ever so slightly- just enough for me to peek through. Throwing her a confused glance, I put my head in the gap and look out. What I see surprises me greatly.

We have new neighbours.

Parked next door, in the house that has been empty for five years, is a large green moving truck. Its enormous frame completely shadows that of the small red car beside it, and I find my curiosity seeps into my gaze as I watch the people exiting the car. A woman steps out first, balancing a small girl on her hip. Her hair is scraped back into a clasp and her features are delicate and feminine. My small glance sideways confirms that mom is already interested- she's always wanted a friend that lives locally. The girl the woman carries appears around four, with the cutest baby face I've ever laid eyes on and two brunette bunches either side of her head. Adorable.

I'm not sure who I was expecting next, but it definitely wasn't the alluring, moody boy that I see now. He looks around my age, and from what I can see of his ebony hair and angled jaw, he's hot. No doubt the population of the student body will completely swarm this one. My eyes instantly lock onto him as he threads his fingers through his hair, but suddenly his gaze snaps to mine and I freeze. After a second of hesitation, I jerk away from the window as though it's on fire and I can sense my cheeks burning already. He must think I'm such a creep. Surprisingly, by the time I've recovered courage enough to peek through again, he doesn't look affected in the slightest- bored, almost.

Suddenly realising that I probably look incredibly strange, creeping

on the neighbours with only my head in view, I withdraw from the curtains and pull them closed swiftly, turning on my heel to face a now grinning mother. She wiggles her eyebrows at me, dancing forward to trap my waist in her hands and press a small kiss against my forehead. "What do you think eh? New neighbours for the first time in years..."

I smile half-heartedly, heading over to the fridge. "I wonder why they moved here. I mean, Lindale isn't exactly the most famous hotspot in the Star Kingdom." I frown confusedly as my eyes scour the shelves, but I'm left disappointed. "No Star Bits," I murmur. My nose wrinkles as I peer at the remnants of our fridge: basically consisting of wafer ham, flavoured water and an old piece of lettuce. Fun, right?

Mom shrugs in reply, slapping my hand away as I reach for a cupcake without even looking up. "She knows me way too well." "We need to go shopping mama," I groan loudly, "There's no food in this house." What? Obviously healthy stuff doesn't count as food. She sticks her tongue out mockingly at me, and I'm momentarily stunned by how alike we are. The truth is, mom and I are similar in more ways than one. Along with our almost matching appearance- auburn curls and the palest of the pale skin, we're both sarcastic and jokey, with an abnormally weird side. Thus the musical marathons we have on Sunday nights

"I'm going upstairs to do some studying," I slam the fridge door shut and grab a lollipop from my sweetie jar. Just as I'm thinking about what homework I have, my phone vibrates in my pocket. An amused smile curves my lips as a particularly horrific picture of Danielle pops onto the screen. "Hey Pauline," I hum as I pick up the line, "How's the blind date going?" I stuff a cola lolly into my mouth as I jog up the stairs, eager to hear her reply. No doubt it will be entertaining; Danielle never uses her phone unless it's urgent.

"Horrible!" She hushes, "I'm in the girls bathrooms at the moment, hiding. Stupid period had to come today, when I'm wearing white trousers. Plus, he has the table manners of a complete pig! He spilt water down me for chrissakes!"

I snort quietly in attempt to rein in my laughter, "Okay," I bite back my smile, "Dry yourself off a bit, first. You're wearing your cardigan aren't you? Well, tie it around your waist to cover the trouser stains and tell him you have tummy ache. Works every time."

"Thank you!" She squeals gratefully, "Okay, I've got to go back out now or it'll be rude. Do you think he'll believe the tummy ache story?"

"Trust me, even the grossest of men understand what you want if you say you have a tummy ache." I roll my eyes at her panicky state, "Are you okay now then? I have studying to do and you, my friend, need to get your ass back on that date."

"Yeah, okay. Chill your tits woman, I'm going."

"Bye, Danielle," My voice is amused, and I'm unable to restrain the smile tugging at the corners of my lips. I wouldn't say that Danielle

and I are polar opposites, but we are definitely very different. Although we're both Class B/C nerds, I tend to be a little bit more resigned around people than what she is. Whilst I usually stay quiet around strangers, she's the slightly gabby, funny one out of us two. I remember when she dyed her hair red in sophomore year, and slapped a jock for calling her a witch. She really doesn't give a damn, and I guess that's what I respect about her.

I head straight to my small desk, observing my messy surroundings in a small glance. The far wall is a light blue, almost completely masked by posters of bands and concert tickets. In fact, by my pillow, I have a signed My Willow Smith ticket that my Dad got me for Christmas. I think its second hand, but I really don't care- it's my prize possession. I practically went through cardiac arrest when they split up.

My bed is an unruly mess, as always. It is right opposite the window, which is in exactly the same position of that from the neighbouring house- meaning either side can see perfectly into the other. What sort of a messed up architect would design that? Especially now that we have neighboursâ€|oh crap.

I tiptoe towards the window and cautiously peer around the window frame into the room opposite. I fight to restrain a deafening groan as I see who's in the room. Of course it has to be the freaking boy. Guess my curtains are staying closed from now onâ€|

Curiously, I tug my silver curtains further back to see that he's packing away his things. It's only this close up that I realise \_quite how\_ hot he actually is. He has a strong, chiselled jawline and defined cheekbones, making his face appear angular and dare I say it, sexy. Inky locks curl over his forehead, matching perfectly with his pair of deep cobalt eyes.

He turns away from me, and I snap out of it. \_What the hell am I doing?\_ Checking out my next door neighbour is one hundred per cent pathetic, especially seeing as we're probably never going to talk. Well, not on my watch anyway. It's not like a guy like him would want to talk to me anyway. By the first day, he'll be one of the most popular guys in school, I bet. Having a sarcastic chick next door will only come in useful to him when he's having trouble with his homework. Yay for me, right? I shake my head in attempt to clear my negative thoughts, stepping away from the window to draw my curtains and hopefully, block out the boy.

Putting on my music, I settle down to do some studying. Yeah, I'm not a nerd but I do like to at least try and get decent grades for my finals. Call me a geek, whatever, but I prefer intellectual badass. My maths final is the one coming up first, and I suck at math, so I guess I'll try and do some revising for that. The Killers blast through my docking station, and I nod my head in time to the music as I stare down at the equations in front of me until my eyes blur. Excuse me for asking, but when am I ever going to need simultaneous equations in life? A text pops up on my screen and I glance over at it.

\_Danielle is hashtag amazeballs: \_I escaped from that hellish date! I'll tell you the details tomorrow ;) Thanks for the help xx

\_Don't get distracted by the phone.\_

\_Ugh go on then. Might as well reply.\_

I type in a hasty reply before turning off my phone to avoid distractions. No doubt if I didn't, mom would walk in and see me texting Violet, and think that is what I've been doing the entire time. She would never believe me if I told her otherwise. Me, her \_daughter\_, her own blood and flesh. Yeah, we have some major trust issues going on in our relationship, mainly due to the time she made me get a bowl cut when I was a kid. I shudder at the thought.

After what seems like endless hours of studying, I'm finally finished and it's getting late. Well, if like me, you count half ten as late. Hey, what can I say? I need all the beauty sleep I can get. I stifle a yawn quickly, and begin to get changed ready for bed, making sure the curtains are firmly closed before I strip. Wouldn't want neighbour dude to get a bit more than what he's bargained for, eh?

I slide into the covers in my pajama top, frowning when I realise that music is playing very loudly next door. Surely that screamo couldn't belong to the mum of a toddler. No, my bet is placed on the boy in the room next door- which would be why I seem to be taking the brunt of the volume. I'm assuming Mr Neighbour dude over there has some guests, by the laughing and heavy rock music I can hear. I can't believe he hasn't been here a day yet, and already he's having a party. Looks like my predictions are coming true.

I sigh defeatedly and slam the pillow over my head in attempt to muffle the sound, curling further into the soft duvet and hoping for the best.

Twenty minutes later, I'm still unsuccessful.

Looks like this will be a long night.

I stir awake to a small sound, and groan quietly as I awake from my slumber. The music from next door still hasn't stopped?! Can a girl not get her beauty sleep anymore? Blinking furiously to clear my vision, I prop myself up on one elbow and turn on the lamp beside my bed. Light floods the room, and I survey the lit scene quickly only to freeze in my tracks, my jaw slacking in surprise.

I stare wide eyed at the boy, who seems just as paralysed as I am.

His eyes lock onto mine in shock and we stare at each other for what feels like hours, but is actually mere seconds. He's positioned halfway through the window, reaching for the opposite sill, with my Minnie mouse bra swinging from his tight grip.

What. The. Actual. F\*\*.

## 2. Come and Get it back

\_\*\*Ch 2: Come and Get it Back\*\*\_

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Dedicated to<strong> \*\*15PrincessAutumn15\*\*

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><p><strong>Rosalina's POV<strong>

My first instinct is to scream.

Unfortunately, the boy is one step ahead of me, it appears. By the time I snap back into reality from my shocked senseless expression, he's already darting out of the window. He doesn't look back as he climbs nimbly over the frame, and my expression hardens from one of a paralytic manner to one of pure confusion and rage combined. "What the absolute hell do you think you are you doing?!"

Swiftly, I yank the covers back and swing my legs out of bed to chase him to the window. He gives me a single unreadable glance back before making the final leap towards the opposite sill, landing so gracefully that a cat would be jealous. My bare legs tingle with goose bumps in the chilly night air, and I fold my arms across my chest as I turn to face the window. Inside the opposite room are a group of boys, all laughing their asses off, barely recognisable in the dim lamp light.

One of the boys clambers up to the window, the breeze in the frosty air ruffling his golden locks. Luigi Toadstool. The school's golden guy. He gives me a soft, reassuring grin which would undoubtedly melt any girl within a second. That category would normally include me, unfortunately, but this time my anger seems to have immunised me from the vortex of perfection that is Luigi. "You must be really confused," He comments, taking in my mixed expressions.

"No shit Sherlock," I snarl, surprising even myself at my hostile tone, "Care to tell me what the f\*\* you guys are doing?"

"Chill," He raises his palms in surrender, "It was a dare, no need to get so worked up about it."

"He stole my freaking bra!" I cry, throwing my arms in the air in frustration, "He broke into my room in the middle of the night, stole my bra and you're telling me not to get worked up about it?" I ask him incredulously, watching him wince at my bat shit crazy tone. I had a right to be crazy though, surely?

"Very nice bra by the way," Another head pops into the window beside Luigi, and I recognise the guy immediately as Waluigi Wario, the schools cheeky prankster. He's mostly popular for the amount of times he's played pranks on the ex-principal- itching powder in her underwear, superglue on a chair and stuff like that. He hasn't performed any tricks on the current one, but i think he's waiting for the right moment to attack. This guy is legendary in our school. He grins mischievously at me, "I do appreciate a girl who loves Disney."

"Shut up," I mutter, my cheeks flaming red. Of all the things, this guy had to steal my freaking Disney bra, too. He couldn't have picked a plain one, or even the pretty rose one that was stashed in my draw? Ugh, talk about humiliating. Surprisingly, most of my anger has diminished by this point, leaving me confused, embarrassed and a little bit overwhelmed.

"Look, can I please have it back?"

"Come and get it."

"Fine," I growl out of frustration. \_Stupid boys. \_I prepare myself to climb over the gap, before another gust of chilly wind alerts my senses to my bare legs and pajama top. Goosebumps crawl over the pale skin, and I wince as I realise I'm in my night clothes. Not exactly something I want to show the three most popular boys at school. \_And I thought this situation couldn't get any more humiliating on my part.\_ They want me to come over? Well they can keep frickin' dreaming: it's not happening.

With a fresh sense of determination, I withdraw my body from the gap, stunningly aware of the fact that if I fall, I am dead. \_Happy thoughts, Rosalina, happy thoughts.\_ Once I'm back in the confines of my safe haven, I fold my arms tightly across my chest and smirk in a small act of defiance. \_Come and get it. \_Well they certainly did, didn't they?

"I'm not coming to get it." I announce the words smugly, but my blue eyes soon mist precariously as Luigi slumps against the wall with a smirk of his own. "No?"

"No," I confirm proudly. "For a start, why should I? You people stole it in the first place; you can bloody well give it back." I hold up one finger, before raising another. "Secondly, I'm in my pyjamas."

"Change." Waluigi leans across the gap, facing me as close as he dare. His eyes glint with challenge; as if he's daring me to come across the gap. His fists are clenched so tight on the window that the knuckles have turned white. My eyes narrow onto his.

"Dude, did I just hear the word change?" I'm on the brink of temptation to push Waluigi away when another head joins the window. Toad himself narrows his eyes onto me, before sending me a playful wink, "Go right ahead, sweetie. Don't mind me." Ladies and gentlemen, introducing Toad- the school's most notorious player. He throws girls away like dirty Kleenex tissues, yet still manages to get them to fall for his charm again and again. Suffice to say, Danielle and I steer well clear of his clique.

"Pervert," Toad mumbles, interrupting my trail of thought by punching Waluigi on the arm.

"Be careful there, Merrick, or you might just hurt my feelings."

"Nah, your ego is way too big for that." The boys clear from the window, one by one, allowing me to scan the scene quickly. My eyes immediately settle onto the boy who stole my bra, a.k.a my hot neighbour, and my curious gaze morphs into a heated glare.\_ Who the hell does he think he is? \_He glances over at me, but before he has the chance to say or do anything, I'm hitching my legs over the sill and sitting precariously on my window seat. I turn to Toad first. "Where is it?"

He just shrugs innocently in reply. I never really expected him to

have it, anyway. Let me fill you in here. Toad Merrick is golden at our school. Perfect looks, perfect personality, perfect grades. He's the least likely to have the bra out of the boys. Quarterback of the football team, school councillor and full time rich nerd were never things I thought would come together, but alas, I have been proved wrong in the epitome of perfect that is Toad Merrick. Yay.

I look to Luigi next, with his scruffy brown hair that somehow makes him even cuter, and his clear blue eyes which almost always have a glint of mischief hidden in their depths. To be honest, I'm not all that shocked that this boy seems to already have befriended the three most popular guys at school. It was expected right? Typical cliché. Luigi simply shakes his head at my inquisitive expression, as does Waluigi, leaving me with one suspect left. Unsurprisingly, it's the boy who committed the crime. I look to him for my answer, and sure enough I receive it in the form of a smirk.

Of course. After all, who else could it be? "You know where my bra is?" I ask him tiredly, running a hand through my knotted bed hair.

"Might do."

"Are you going to give it back, or am I wasting my time?" I ask, unable to stop the irritation seeping into my voice. What the hell am I doing here? I could be curled up in bed right now, happily lost in beautiful, beautiful slumber. Yet here I am, on a school night, trying to get my bra back from the three most popular guys at school and my hot next door neighbour. Not exactly a normal occurrence, eh?

"He's not going to give it back. Just so you know," Luigi pipes in, rolling his eyes at his smug friend, "Anyway what's your name gorgeous?"

"Rosalina," I reply suspiciously, fighting back my blush at the compliment. I'm not sure about other girls, but my cheeks have a tendency to flush crimson at even the slightest compliment. I guess you could say it's a flaw; I'm working on it. Shaking my head to clear my thoughts, "I do go to your school you know."

"Really? How could I have overlooked a face like yours?"

The guys all cringe; mirroring my facial expression exactly. "Save the flirting for another time," My neighbour grins casually, his eyes flickering to mine in a silent challenge. My gaze morphs into a glare as I look at him, my body stiffening in annoyance.

"I was not flirting." I speak through gritted teeth.

"Whatever helps you sleep at night, chica."

"Who the hell do you think you are?!"

"I'm Blayke Moonlight," He replies smoothly, his lips twitching upwards at the corners into an annoyingly cute half smirk, "Nice to meet you, Rosie."

"Aw, the feeling isn't mutual," I batter my eyelashes in a sickly sweet manner, before shooting a sideways glance at the boys watching



our fight with both amused, yet wary expressions.

"Bull isn't your colour, princess."

I silently fume, glaring at the cocky boy in front of me. "Give me my bra."

He smiles sadistically at me. \_Infuriating, cocky little-\_

My mouth drops open to tell him so, but I'm stopped in my tracks by a slight tug on my pajama sleeve. I spin around, surprised, to see my little brother standing there. He rubs his eyes tiredly as a yawn escapes that tiny mouth of his. "What's all the noise about, Rosalina?"

He stiffens a little bit as he notices the boys next door, his mouth dropping open. "You're talking to \_boys\_?" He sounds flabbergasted, and I wince, wanting nothing more than to curl up and die as I spy Blayke's delighted smirk in my peripheral vision. Waluigi continues to blabber on, oblivious to the humiliation he is drowning his sister in. "Why are you talking to boys in the middle of the night Rosalina? You never talk to boys. Especially since Mario. You've avoided them until now. Do you want a boyfriend, is that it? Oh, or is one of them your boyfriend? Or maybe-"

I slap a hand over his mouth, dropping my hair over my face in an attempt to conceal my blush. "Right, time for bed then Mario!" I chime loudly, feigning happiness. I usher him out of the room as quickly as possible, muttering profanities under my breath as he protests under my determined statuesque. It takes everything I have not to head-butt the closed door, I swear.

With one glance at Blayke's expression, I slam the window shut and pull the curtains closed. I think I've had enough humiliation for one night. Yeah, you may call me a coward for not fighting to get my bra back, but I don't think I could face Blayke after that horrifying encounter. I dread to think what he'd say. I dive into the bedcovers, smothering my face in the pillow as I release a muffled scream. Why does this stuff happen to me?!

After a while, I begin to fade back into the land of dreams, one thing running through my mind as I drift off.

\_Blayke Moonlight, I'd sleep with one eye open if I were you.\_

"Come on, we're going to be late!" My mum tugs on my arm forcefully, dragging me towards the door. She grins excitedly at Jack and I as she shoos us down the driveway towards the sidewalk, barely remembering to shut the door, never mind lock it. "Mum, do I have to go?" I hush, leaning closer to her as I eye the house sceptically.

"Of course you do! It's only polite to welcome the neighbours!"

Little does mum know that I've actually met Blayke already, and I'm not too keen to see him again. I was absolutely exhausted this morning. \_Guess that's what you get for staying up in the middle of the night with a delinquent, a player, a prankster and a god. Lucky me. \_I stretch on an elasticated friendly smile as mum rings the

doorbell, smoothing down my top and clasping my brother's hand for dear life.

"Rosalina, why are you holding my hand? I'm not five," Mario grumbles beside me, trying desperately to retrieve his hand from my tight grip. Suddenly, the door swings open revealing the woman we saw yesterday. She grins happily as she sees us, before ushering us inside. "Welcome, welcome! I'm Princess Autumn Moonlight; it's a pleasure to meet you!"

Her dark curls hang wild around her porcelain face, the exact inky shade that Blayke's hair is. It's quite obvious that he gets his appearance from his mom's side, although Blayke's skin is more olive than hers. I'm guessing that he inherited that from his father, wherever he may be.

"Indeed it is!" My mom gushes cheerily, and I smile at the sight. Mom's always complaining about how she hasn't any friends living nearby, so this is good for her. "I'm Cosmo, Cosmo Star. This is my daughter, Rosalina and my son, Mario."

"Hi there," Autumn smiles welcomingly at us, "It's a pleasure to meet you! I'll have to call my kids down in a bit, so you can meet them! Eulyric is a little younger, but Blayke should be around your age Rosalina—Anyway, come on into the lounge and I'll make us some drinks!"

I trail behind my mother into the living room, settling daintily at the edge of a plump couch as I glance around my surroundings. The house is cosy and warm, despite its lack of furnishings. Candles and dried flowers are set up on the mantelpiece, giving the fireplace a rosy glow. As for the layout, well it's exactly like that of our house, but the opposite. Kind of like a mirror image.

"Do you take two sugars or one? Milk?" Autumn frets, running a hand through her untamed curls, her bright eyes flickering between myself and my mum.

"I'll come and help if you'd like?" My mom offers happily, and the relief on Autumn's face is immediate, but is quickly masked with denial.

"Are you sure? You're a guest, I—"

My mom interrupts her with a firm nod, and together they walk over to the kitchen, leaving me with my annoyingly little brother. I glance over at Mario, to see that he's playing his nintendo 3ds. "Mario," I hiss lowly, "That's rude! Put it away, now."

"But she's not even here!" Mario protests in a grumbling voice, his eyes still focused securely on the brightly lit screen of his gadget. I roll my eyes at his childish behaviour, "Mario. It's rude."

"Fine, I'll put it away\_ mom."\_

I roll my eyes fondly at my little brother, settling into the sofa as I breathe in the tantalising vanilla scent. As much as Jack and I do fight, he can be a cutie sometimes- both physically and in persona. Unfortunately for me, he inherited all the good genes. His scruffy brown hair and wide green eyes somewhat resemble my Dad, whereas his

faint scatter of freckles and snub nose are inherited from Mom. Even I admit that he's adorable, but in my defence, he is the devil's incarnation behind the good looks.

"Here you are, sweetheart," Autumn places a plate of cookies on the coffee table which, from the mouth-watering smell, I'm guessing are homemade. She hands me and Mario a glass of lemonade each, and I smile gratefully at her. "Thanks, Autumn. This looks wonderful."

Her answering smile is sweet, before she rushes off to call her kids downstairs. "Blayke, Eulyric! Come down here please! We have guests."

"What is it mom?" I hear Blayke grumble in reply, before the patter of footsteps down the stairs catches my attention. My breath hitches as Alec comes down the stairs, wearing some faded jeans and a black t shirt which hugs his torso, adorning his well-defined muscles. His gaze locks onto mine, his eyes widening in recognition before turning confused. "What are you doing here, Rosie?"

"You two know each other?" The two women enter the room, holding cups of tea and sharing confused glances.

"No!" I rush out, just as Blayke claims the opposite.

"Rosalina, dear, you never told me you knew this dashing young lad," Mom frowns. I cringe at her wording, taking note of Blayke's smug smile as he comes to stand beside me. He slings an arm around my shoulders casually, smirking at me from the corner of my eye.

"Oh, Rosalina and I go way back, Ma'am."

My mom turns to me with a horrifying obvious playful wink, and I slump into my hands. \_What sort of godforsaken trick is Blayke trying to pull? He couldn't have just gone along with it? \_Of course not, he's Blayke Moonlight. So far, he seems intent on annoying me. Almost as intent as my mother is on playing matchmaker. \_Always whining at me to get a boyfriend. \_Does she not seem to realise that by nagging me, she's only rubbing the fact in my face?

"Ah, how sweet!" Autumn gushes, and I cringe into my palms. "How did you meet?"

Beside me, Blayke stiffens, before coughing discreetly to disguise his suspicious actions. "Oh, well she's friends with my cousin, you see," He lies smoothly, "Mona. I met Rosalina one night in the library, when I was searching forâ€¦"

"A book?" I supply my face lighting up mischievously. He nods, his eyes narrowing a fraction of an inch as he takes notice of my sudden excitement, but not enough to ruin his cover. I lean back into his shoulder, to his surprise, before casually continuing. "Oh yes, you always have had a passion for romancesâ€¦do you remember you came out of the closet that night?"

\_Payback is a b\*tch, Blayke.\_

Autumn chokes on her tea, "Blayke, you're gay?"

"No," Blayke's voice is tight as he shoots me a glare, "I was

justâ€¦|confused."

My shoulders shake with silent laughter as I look up at his positively murderous expression. Blayke turns to flash me a glare, grabbing my hand and pulling me up from the sofa. "Rosalina and I are going up to my room. We have a \_lot\_," he enunciates the word clearly, his heated gaze boring holes into my smug smile, "to talk about."

"Keep the door open!" My mom chimes after us, chuckling merrily with her newfound friend. I scowl as the heat reaches my cheeks. \_Could I get any more red?\_

"You look like a tomato." Blayke comments beside me as we reach his bedroom, poking my cheek curiously.

"Why thank you, I'm charmed," I reply sarcastically, rolling my eyes as a smile tugs at my lips.

"Ever heard that sarcasm is the lowest form of wit?"

"How would you know anything about wit?"

"That one, right there,\_ almost\_ hurt Rosalina. You should be careful with my feelings. They're precious." Blayke clasps his chest in mime hurt, pouting adorably.

Obviously, when I say adorably I mean annoyingly.

"So, you bat for the other team then?"

Blayke turns to me with a scowl. "You're going to regret that, princess."

"Sure, sure," I dismiss smugly, taking a seat on the edge of his bed and earning myself another glare. I take the opportunity to look around his room. The walls are block navy and white, with a few posters scattered around. I recognise Nicki Minaj and Willow Smith. Other than that, his room is eerily bare.

"I mean it, Rosalina. They don't call me a bad boy for nothing."

"Egotistical jerk."

"Ah but the ladies love it."

"Did it hurt when you fell down the whore tree and banged every girl on the way down?"

"No, it was actually very pleasurable."

"Ew, pervert," I hit him on the shoulder as he chuckles lowly at my disgusted expression. My nose smoothes out as I turn to him again, "Just wonderingâ€¦|how old are you?"

"17â€¦|" He trails off, "You?"

"16. I'm turning seventeen next month though."

"Aw, my big girl is getting older!" He ruffles my hair patronisingly, raising a scowl from me. \_I hate \_being patronised. With a passion.

"Go and bang yourself, Blayke."

"Ah, but why would I do that when I have lots of lady volunteers willing to do the job?"

"Man slag."

"Ooh, she swears!"

Ugh. Stupid boy.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Author Note: Do everybody likes the idea of Mario being Rosalina's Brother.<strong>

### 3. Redfoo Lullabies

\_\*\*Ch 3: Redfoo Lullabies\*\*\_

\* \* \*

><p><em><strong>Rosalina's Pov<strong>\_

"What's up your fine ass this morning?"

I turn to face Danielle with an acknowledging grunt, slamming my head into my locker with more force than intended. I whimper as I feel the tenderness emerge in my temple and my fingers automatically rise up to massage the pain. Have you ever loathed something so much that just the mere thought of it wipes the smile off your face, and instantly makes you a hundred times more irritable?

Ah, then you understand my mutual relationship with Monday. Specifically Monday mornings.

"You look like crap you know," Danielle comments bluntly, leaning against the lockers beside mine and crossing her arms across her chest in a casual manner. I shoot her a scowl in reply. "It's not my fault that Blayke bloody Moonlight doesn't know what time is acceptable to play music," I grumble under my breath. My hands dart angrily into my locker to retrieve my books, and I shut it with a satisfying \_slam\_! Huh, maybe I should get anger management.

"Seriously though, did you get dressed in the dark or something? Look at what you're wearing!"

I peer self-consciously down at my pale blue skinny jeans and Transformers Age of Extinction t shirt. My usual home attire. I don't have anything against this outfit- it's comfy, casual and practical. Danielle, however, has a different opinion on my clothing choices, and she never hesitates to make it known. "Not now, Danielle. I'm not in the mood." I murmur, rubbing the skin under my eyes in an attempt to erase the bags there. Sure enough, I know I look like crap. My

hair is done up into a sloppy messy bun, and my converse are beginning to get tatty from overuse. Personally, I blame my dishevelled appearance on Blayke Moonlight. He was the one playing Metallica until god knows what time last night.

"So, news on the street says that you have a drool worthy neighbour next door."

I cringe as we begin the slow walk towards Math, popping some gum into my mouth to cover the fact that I forgot to brush my teeth this morning in my dazed, sleepy state. Danielle chatters on obliviously beside me. "I can't believe you live next to Blayke Moonlight. Man candy, dude! Dammit, you're lucky. You probably don't even realise how lucky you are, you know that? Free stripping shows every morning and night! You might even -"

"Stop right there!" I hastily pull her to a stop. "There's a lot you don't know so don't go assuming things."

She raises an expectant eyebrow. "Spill."

"Well basically, I was woken up on Saturday night because-"

"Rosalina!" My eyes snap towards the source of the voice, before widening in horror. Toad Merrick stands further up the corridor, flanked by Luigi, both of their gazes trained on my disgruntled form. Just at the mere sound of their God's voice, people immediately zone onto me and before I know it, I've gone from my safe spot below the radar to hot topic for gossip in the matter of a few seconds. I watch precariously as the two head towards me, shrinking back into the lockers and hoping to god that there is \_some other Riley stood conveniently behind me.\_

"Hey there," Toad greets me with a small smile as he nears us, leaning on the locker beside me. "How are you?" Is he completely oblivious to the curious stares we're getting? Maybe he's just grown overly used to it by now, what with him being popular and all. Suddenly self-conscious under multiple gazes, I flush pink and tuck my hair behind my ear.

"I've been better," My voice comes out surprisingly strangled and croaky as Luigi steps into my only escape route. I'm surrounded, literally, by a confused and most likely irritated best friend, a blonde jock slash nerd trying to make small talk and the guy who set the principals desk on fire! Karma really has it out for me.

"So has Blayke given it back yet?" Luigi asks me curiously, shooting a sideways glance to a very overwhelmed Danielle. Her face is puckered in confusion, and it would take a blind man not to see the interrogation I have to look forward to. \_Yay.\_ "Nope," I grumble disappointedly. Yesterday, when I was around his house, I took the valuable time to search for my bra in his room. We were there for an hour and I still couldn't find it. And the worst part? All throughout that hour, he simply watched me get more and more irritated, and he \_smirked.\_ Infuriating jerk hole.

"You know I could help you get him backâ€¦|" A spark of excitement flares in Luigi's eyes as he says the dreaded words.

"Er, no thanks." I chuckle uneasily, "Helping isn't really your forte. Your forte would be fire, danger and exclusion."

"I'm just a dial tone away if you change your mind," Luigi winks playfully. Beside me, Danielle cringes and straightens from her slumped statuesque against the lockers. "Excuse me?" She butts in, "Have I missed something here? Last Friday you didn't even know she existed and now you're flirting? What happened on Saturday night?"

Silence.

"Care to share, Rosalina?" Her tone is demanding, and I catch the tail end of a scrutinizing glare which makes me wince. I look to Luigi and Toad for help, but remain unsuccessful. Dylan shifts uncomfortably under my pleading gaze, and Luigi just grins, amused by the situation. \_Just me, then. \_I take a deep breath. \_I'm gonna need it.\_

"Basically Waluigi, Luigi and Toad were at Blayke's house having a little party or something. I was asleep, but I woke up and Blayke was in my room and he had my bra! He ran across the window before I could stop him, and that's how I was introduced to the others. They stole my bra, Dan- that's how I know them. Now if you'll excuse meâ€¦"

I scarper hastily away from the scene and without another word, escape into my maths classroom.

Yeah I wish.

"What?" Danielle shrieks, her voice pierces the humid air as she locks my forearm in a steely grip, yanking me back towards her none too gently. "Blayke Moonlight stole your bra? Why? Have you got it back? How does he know the others? What did you talk about? How-"

"I will answer any questions you have in math, just please don't decapitate me." My voice comes out robotic and automated, rehearsed almost. Ah who am I kidding? I've said the same sentence about fifty times over. I have a tendency to forget about telling my best friend everything that happens in my life, sue me.

"Okay," Danielle agrees reluctantly, eyes narrowing. "But I want every single detail. Capiche?"

"Er, we're just going to go nowâ€¦" Toad hums beside me, and my head snaps towards him. To be honest, I completely forgot him and Luigi were thereâ€¦I nod in confirmation, offering the pair a small smile as they walk away. I guess they aren't that bad after all. I turn back to Danielle with my hands in automatic surrender. "I know I should've called you, I'm sorry. I was too busy eating and sleeping. I tell you everything about my weekend, and you describe this disastrous blind date. Deal?"

She ponders my request jokingly, scratching her chinny chin chin. "Deal."

"And that's my sad, sad tale." I finish off, peering warily around the cosy library interior to check that I'm not about to get booted out anytime soon for talking. Although we are hidden in the furthest corner of the library, the librarian has ears like a hawk, and I hate

the idea of her listening to us from behind that lacquered desk of hers. My ears pick up on no sounds, luckily, and I sigh in relief as I turn back to Danielle, but the sigh quickly diminishes in my throat as I take note of her expression.

I wasn't exactly sure what I was expecting Danielle's reaction to be after I told her about my weekend, but this wasn't on the agenda. A fan girl squeal? Interrogation? Sure. But instead I'm faced with something a lot scarier: Danielle is thinking. You might think it strange for me to be worried about that, but you don't quite understand how opinionated Danielle is. She's really loud, really confident and she knows her mind clearly. Very rarely do I ever see her thinking before she says something, hence the butterflies which have somehow found their way into my stomach.

"I thinkâ€|" Danielle begins- hesitation evident in her faraway, drifting gaze and detached voice, "I think you need to get revenge." Her eyes snap to mine, surely now, and an evil smirk curves those lips of hers. "He's not going to give it back- accept that and move on. You need to pull out the big guns if you want that bra back, and I understand why you do. I mean, that\_ thing\_ shouldn't be allowed to exist." She pauses to wrinkle up her nose, before continuing with more excitement prominent in her tone. "Blackmail him, steal his boxers, embarrass that pretty little face of his and knock him down a peg or two. That's the way you get the bra back."

I nod, fighting to restrain the evil laugh bubbling up my throat. Danielle's right- did I honestly think he was going to give it back without a fight? No, I need to get my revenge. "Should I be taking notes?" I tease her, taking a bite of my ham sandwich, "I feel like I'm at an army camp or something." She rolls her eyes at this, settling back into the bookshelf as normal and taking a forkful of her own pasta salad. Unlike me, full time steak lover and meat-eater, she's a vegetarian.

"So, how did the blind date go?" I ask her curiously, and her expression immediately drops from a half-hearted smile into a scowl. "Horrendously," She shudders, "He had the table manners of a complete pig, he wasn't attractive in the slightest and his name was \_Wario.\_ Honestly, who would name their child that? It's evil!"

I snort with laughter, catching the attention of a passing boy. He falters as he sees us, immediately blushing crimson in a cute form of embarrassment. His pretty brown eyes are shielded with a pair of thick black rimmed glasses, and he wears a shirt two times too big for his tall, skinny frame. I offer him a friendly smile, which he shakily returns before taking a step towards us. Danielle stiffens beside me, and I glance over to see her blushing and smiling at the boy. \_No way.\_

"Hi Dk," She grins, "What's up?" My face lapses in disbelief as I watch the affair. Danielle is \_blushing\_ beneath that white face powder. God, why did she never tell me she had a crush on this dude? I mean, it's \_adorable!\_ \_Immediately my face breaks into a dazed, cheeky grin and I stand up from my position on the tatty carpeted floor.

"You know, I've just realised that I have an erâ€|.I have something to do! Er, you two go on without me. Danielle, call me tonight. We need to talk." I wink playfully, which causes her to blush even more



as she shoots me a returning glare. Aw, she knows that I know that she has a crush! She'll hate me for this, but hey, what can I say? I'm cupid's assistantâ€¦

"Can everybody please get their homework out?"

I freeze. Chemistry homework? We had chemistry homework? My hands slap to my face in realisation. Shit! Of course we did! What with all this bra business, my mind has been focused elsewhere. I've definitely got a detentionâ€¦ I groan loudly, cupping my face in my hands and wincing as I hear the snapping of Mrs. Peach Toadstool heels getting closer and closer. Rest in peace Rosalina Star, because if the teacher doesn't kill me, mom surely will.

"Miss Star, may I see your homework please?"

"I-uh, I might have er left it at home? Can I bring it in tomorrow Miss?"

"Now, Rosalina. We have a policy at this school. I can't just favourite one child." Mrs. Toadstool sneers at me from behind her thick framed glasses. She's never really liked me, but the feeling is pretty mutual to be honest. She's one of those tight, thin women who care of nothing more than discipline. She even looks like one of those evil headmistresses for chrissakes! Her coarse blonde hair is pulled tightly into a coil at the back of her head, and her teeth are dashed with crimson. How is it possible to apply lipstick that badly?

"Excuse me?" gasps, her eyes widen in sheer shock before brimming over with liquid fire. Oh crap, did I say that aloud? Anger flushes her face in answer to my question, her hairy cheeks staining red as her pupils dilate dangerously. Truthfully, she looks like a rare breed of dragon.

"Detention!" She barks, her musty breath fanning my face so much so that I have to fight to keep a straight face, "I will not have students disrespect me in my classroom! Especially not when they've forgotten their homework!"

Bitch.

My hand knocks timidly on the door of the detention room, and a deep feeling of disappointment stirs in my gut. Cautiously, I take a few steps in to face Mrs. Daisy Sarasa, a fairly nice teacher from my art class a few years ago. Quite a strange girl actually. I mean, you just have to take a look at her socks and sandals to know that. Plus, that ginger beard does\_ not\_ look appealing on her. "Take a seat, Miss Star, and complete the detention slip." I turn to face the room, seeing for myself that it is pretty much empty. Zoey the Fox- a greasy kid who smells like she hasn't washed in weeks- sits in the back row. Shortly to the left of her is a girl with a nose piercing and dyed pink hair who sends me a piercing glare, and then there's the couple in the front row who I can't make out because their faces are attached. Fun.

I make my way to a seat by the window, a fair distance away from Zoey's body odour. Leaning my head against the cool glass, I attempt to clear my head a little. After six murderously long hours at school, I should be at home. But no, I'm stuck here in this dingy

room with a couple making out, a dozing teacher and a girl who won't stop glaring at me. All of this, just for questioning a teacher's make-up application. What happened to Freedom of Speech?!

I wince as I hear the door opening, a fatigued sigh escaping my lips. I just want to go to sleep, is that such a crime? And preferably not by succumbing to Metallica lullabies. "Sit down, kid, and complete the detention slip." I hear Mrs. Sarasa's gruff voice speaking, but frankly I cannot be bothered to move an inch and see who my new detention buddy is. My head is killing me.

"Well look at what the cat dragged in," a familiar voice chuckles beside me. My head darts up, despite the pain, and I groan loudly as I see who it is. "Just for that, I'm going to come and sit next to you." Blayke comments with a smirk, clumsily pulling out the chair beside me and plonking himself down.

"Abracadabra," I mutter under my breath, before pausing to assess the damage. "Nope. You're still here."

I'm not going to lie; I'm disappointed that my magic trick didn't work.

Alec gives me a strange look, and I just roll my eyes, turning away. How is it possible for a boy to be this annoying? Silently, I fish my phone from my pocket as a distraction. I have a horrible habit of scanning through my messages to avoid socializing. Unfortunately for me, no new messages have come through- meaning I'm on my own. Oh joy.

Suddenly my phone is whisked away from me, and I yelp in surprise. Blayke holds it securely in his right hand, angling his body away from me so that I can't reach it. "Blayke!" I protest loudly. My gaze switches to the teacher dozing happily in the corner, and I roll my eyes. Is it just me, or is that sickeningly cliché? "Give it back you stupid ass llama!" I turn to pound my fists against Blayke's back, to no avail. Scowling, I hit him harder and faster- still earning no reaction of course. I groan loudly and slump, "Give it back!" I whine as another painful throb hits my head like a bullet.

"Ooh nice picture, Rosie."

My head darts up, and I only just manage to spy the picture he's looking at from over his shoulder. Since when did I get so short? The picture is of Danielle and I wearing matching blue and blue swimsuit. We look like hot. "Please?" I groan feebly, "Please can I have my phone back?"

I can sense Blayke's body shaking with laughter as he looks through my camera roll and my hits against his back slow in defeat until I'm barely trying at all. What's the point? It's pretty obvious he's not going to give it back.

"Hey, is this you?" Blayke asks me curiously, twisting his body around to face me again. My stomach lurches at the picture he's showing me, taken only a few short months ago- but practically from another era. I can sense my throat tightening as I take notice of the people in the picture, and it's a harsh awakening to say the least. In this picture, I'm happy. It sounds so simple aloud, but it's a lot

more complex than the words let on. If you look closely, my eyes are crinkled with laughter and even my hair hangs down my back in sleek, shiny locks. This is the time I made an effort. Why, you ask? The boy next to me. The dirty blonde haired, hazel eyed jock poking his tongue out at me with his arm casually slung over my shoulders. The sight of him still hurts- a painful, sore burn where my heart should be.

Why hadn't I deleted this picture?

\_Because it's all you have left of him.\_

"Yeah." My voice escapes as a soft murmur, and I can barely recognise it as my own. Sensing that something is wrong, Blayke's eyes widen and he shifts uncomfortably in his seat. I take the opportunity to dart my hand in and grab the phone back. I can't help the reassurance I feel as I hide the picture, tucking the cell safely back into my pocket. "You tricked me," Blayke whines beside me, and I scoff a little to hide the sudden weight in my chest.

"What are you, five?"

"Yep," Blayke confirms cheekily, "I could be your toy boy baby." He winks flirtily, and I recoil in disgust despite my chuckles. If he thinks that he's going to tempt me into his charms that easily, he's sadly mistaken. Unlike the other girls pining after him, I know what I'm in for with this playboy- and he isn't worth the inevitable packets of Kleenex and Ben and Jerry's ice-cream.

"So, your first day and you already have a detention, huh?" I ask him casually, leaning back in my chair and crossing my arms across my chest in an attempt for nonchalance. I'm kind of curious about how he got his detention, sue me. He gives me a lopsided grin at this, leaning forward to play with a stray pencil crayon left on the desk. "Yep. I'm just that bad ass."

I give him a questioning look, and he sighs heartily before grumbling under his breath, "I got into an argument with ." He pauses for a second before adding, "Asshole."

"Mrs. Wendy is an asshole," I agree with a small chuckle, "You know, he once told a girl off for wearing her ponytail too high. Apparently she was blocking the view of other students." All true, every word, I swear. Blayke chuckles at this, and that's when it hits me. Alec and I aren't arguing! I guess the apocalypse is near, after all.

Blayke leans down to fumble in his bag, before pulling out a pair of ear buds and an iPhone. I roll my eyes as he successfully blocks out the rest of the world, leaning back into the chair and closing his eyes. What is it with boys and the volume of their music, may I ask? Do they constantly feel the need to burst their eardrums with eighty decibels, or something? Heck, even I can make out the lyrics to the song blaring out of the earphones. I begin humming along to the song, muttering lyrics under my breath. Blayke has a good taste in music, I'll give him that. I'm a sucker for Redfoo.

I'm cut short in my rave when the music ceases, and my head snaps over to Blayke, who watches me with raised eyebrows. "You like Redfoo?" He sounds surprised, but moody at the same time if that makes sense.

"Yeah," I shrug, "They're pretty awesome."

"Good for you. Now can you please quit the humming? It's really annoying."\_Whoa- bipolar much?\_

And here I thought we were capable of civilised conversation\_.  
\_Jerk.

"Oh my apologies, your highness. I thought you wouldn't be able to hear me over the millions of decibels blasting your ears apart." I retort sarcastically, matched with a hard scowl. Blayke meets my glare with another of his own, and we lock into an intense stare-down. When my head gives another painful throb however, I break the eye contact to lean my head against the cool glass of the window again. I would kill for some painkillers right now.

And I still have another fifteen minutes left. \_Joy.\_

"Hey Rosalina?"

"What?" I growl in frustration, turning to the open window for the fiftieth time in ten minutes. Tonight, Blayke seems to have recognised that my patience is low and he seems intent on annoying the living sugar out of me. There he sits, slouched against his window seat with a victorious smirk on his face, which I'd kill to wipe off. I deliberated closing the window, trust me, but he just pelted it continuously with bits of broken pencil and boiled sweets, and in a way- this is somehow the less annoying option.

"Are you Google?" Blayke asks me bluntly.

"What?" I turn to him, squinting in confusion.

"Because you have everything I'm searching for."

"What the f\*\* Blayke-"

"I was reading a book of numbers yesterday, and I realise I don't have yours."

"Blayke, what are you-"

"Do you believe in love at first sight? Or do you want me to walk by again?"

"Blayke, stop-"

"Are you a parking ticket? Because you've got fine written all over you."

"Stop!"

"Stop what?" Blayke asks me innocently, despite the malicious grin curving the corners of his lips upwards. "Giving you compliments? Is a guy not allowed to hit on his crush these days?"

...Did I just hear that?

My cheeks flame instantly and I begin to choke on my own saliva.

"Crush?! What?"

Blayke stares at me plainly for a second, before roaring with laughter. "Aw, you actually believed me? That's just \_sweet\_." He wipes metaphorical tears from under his eyes, the odd chuckle still escaping his lips. My face hardens into a humiliated scowl. What a jerk. I turn to face my homework again, and begin to scribble down the answers as quickly as I can- uncaring of whether they're correct or not. I just want to escape this torture. It's silent for a couple of minutes with just the scratching sound of my pencil on the paper, before Blayke takes the chance to annoy me all over again.

"Hey Rosalina?" I swear if I hear that one more time, there will be nothing but a pile of ash left of Alec's tiny balls by tomorrow.

"What?" I practically spit the word through my gritted teeth, sending the devils incarnation a death glare.

"The effect I have on you is just \_adorable\_, I must say."

"What, you mean wanting to rip your head off your shoulders?" I say in a sickeningly sweet tone.

"Yep: you look like an angry kitten. And my god, that blush. I can't believe you believed me."

"Shut up." I turn away again to hide the humiliation staining my cheeks.

"Hey Rosalina?"

"WHAT?"

"Is your face from McDonalds? Because," He pauses to wink at me, "I am lovin it."

That boy is just too infuriating for his own good.

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><p><em><strong>Author Note: PLEASE DON'T BE A SILENT READER! :D  
xox<strong>\_

#### 4. Horror Movie

**\*\*Ch 4: Horror Movies\*\***

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Dedicated to ArmoredEnder335<strong>

\* \* \*

><p>"I'm sorry. Could you repeat that please?"<p>

"I told Autumn that you would babysit tonight," Mom repeats tiredly, running a hand through her newly cut curls. I blink at her, uncomprehending- is this some sort of a joke or is she actually

serious? "And you told her that why?" I question loudly. She winces at my tone of voice, turning away ashamedly.

"I was talking about how occasionally you do babysitting for people-"She holds up a single finger when I go to butt in. Actually I've only ever babysat once, and it did not go too well to say the least. "Anyway, she mentioned that she was going to a business conference tonight, and I offered your help."

"Wait, who am I babysitting? Blayke or Eulyric? I'm pretty sure that Blayke could look after her if he put that pea-sized brain to some use." I roll my eyes at the thought. Why is Autumn asking for a babysitter when she knows, surely, that Blayke is perfectly able to do it himself? Lazy bastard. Mom sighs before me, massaging her temples to try and relieve her stress. Despite having a long day at work, she still looks stunning from her lunch with Autumn earlier. A pair of skinny jeans really does accentuate mom's killer figure- she looks more like my sister than ever.

"Look, Rosalina, please don't argue. You need money for college don't you?" Mom pleads, clutching her wine glass stem as though her life depends on it. She must have had a bad patient today. It's a day in the life of being a doctor, I suppose- not every case ends well. Deciding that I'm being a little selfish, I hitch my legs from their comfortable position on the couch and walk over to peck mom on the cheek.

"Alright mama," I murmur, "Put your feet up and eats some Hershey's okay? I'll babysit them both." Ruffling her new beach wave bob, I head towards the door quietly.

"Thank you Rosalina," Mom says behind me, and I turn slightly to return her grateful smile, something similar to warmth stirring in the pit of my stomach. Call me corny but I like pleasing my mom. "There are some cupcakes on the stand if you want one. Take some over for Eulyric and Blayke, okay?"

Hmmâ€¦ something tells me that even cupcakes aren't going to help me out tonight.

The two simple doorbell tones ricochet throughout the chilly air, and I shiver in my woolly sweater- rubbing my hands together for warmth. \_Please don't answer the door. Please don't answer the door. \_It's pointless hoping, I know. The door swings open, cascading light upon my frozen figure. "Rosalina! Come in, come in! You must be freezing." Autumn ushers me inside with a beaming smile that I find myself returning unconsciously. How can a mother and son be that different, I wonder?

"Thank you so much for coming on such short notice!" Autumn smiles gratefully at me, "I was terrified I was going to have to call the kids' Aunt Ashley , Mona's mother, and they're on holiday at the moment. Let's just say that you saved me a tonne of hassle."

"You're welcome." I reply, peering around my surroundings and soaking up the warmth. The house is a lot more furnished then when I last saw it: with warm beige rugs and picture frames decorating the interior. The earthy tones compliment themselves, and instantly I feel at home. Autumn checks her watch beside me, sending me one last grateful glance. "I'm afraid I really need to go and get ready now, Rosalina.

There are sodas in the fridge; Blayke and Eulyric are in the living room if you want them. I'll be down in ten minutes tops, okay?"

I salute her teasingly as she jogs up the stairs, turning my attention towards the living room humming with chatter and socialisation. Cautiously, I peer around the door to see a sight I was not expecting to see- Blayke playing with Eulyric.

I watch, aghast, as the pair play together, oblivious to my presence. Laughing with his sister as she pours 'tea' into his cup, and taking a pretend biscuit from her- rubbing his tummy to her delight. Where did this Blayke come from? The jerk I know from school is suddenly showing a whole other side to him which I frankly didn't realise existed. The guy I know wouldn't be caught dead doing half of this stuff. I watch in silenced awe as the heart-warming scene plays out, and I can't help but wonder if there's more than meets the eye with Blayke Moonlight. That maybe he's not all bad.

Of course that doesn't last for long.

"Rosie!" Blayke exclaims from the other side of the room, shocking me out of my thoughts. "Finally the babysitter is here. Took you long enough." He straightens up and walks past me, deliberately shoving me backwards with his steely hard shoulder. Eulyric watches him in angst, her adorable porcelain features crinkling in hurt. "Blayke, why are you leaving?"

Her innocence warms me to the core, and I hastily dash towards the vacant space in her tea party. "Hello there," I smile, crouching down at her level, "I love your dress! Did you choose it yourself?" Immediately she flushes pink and hides behind her hair, her fingers scrabbling and picking at a loose thread of her dress. "Yes," She replies shyly, her wide doe eyes peering at me curiously- as though measuring me up. "Where was Blayke gone?"

"He's probably gone to put some perfume on," I say in a hushed whisper, "He's a bit smelly, isn't he?" She giggles delightedly at me, and dances closer- her timid approach disintegrating almost instantly. She comes closer and offers me an adorable toothy grin, which I gladly return. "I like you," She announces, grabbing my hand and leading me to sit down at the vacant spot in her tea party. "Would you like to join our tea party?"

"I would love to," I smile, sitting down cross legged on her picnic blanket and taking a dainty teacup from the set up. "You know, I'm very thirsty."

"Would you like some tea?" She asks me in a singsong giggly voice, picking up the teapot and leaning over to pour some 'tea' in my cup. "This is my best tea set so we need to be careful not to break it," She leans over to whisper in my ear. "The tea is only pretend though. Mommy says I can't have real tea or I might get burnt."

"Oh okay. Are you a good pretender?" I'm fighting the urge to squeal at how cute she is right now, seriously I am. I mime a sip of tea, moaning in appreciation and making her giggle.

"I could have you moaning louder than that sunshine," Blayke whispers in my ear, startling me. I spin around quickly to slap him on the shoulder as he laughs, shooting him a scowl. "Alec, don't say stuff

like that in front of your sister."

"Why not? She doesn't know what it means." He shrugs it off casually, lounging on the couch unattractively. Unfortunately for me, my position in the tea party puts me at the perfect distance and height to be a footrest for Blayke, as proved by the devil himself. I huff and shove his feet from my shoulders. "With a brother like you, it won't take her long to figure out."

"That hurts right here, Star." He clamps a hand over his heart dramatically, earning an eye-roll from me. He really is immature.

"Oh bite me, Moonlight."

"Just tell me where, sunshine."

Ew. I wrinkle my nose in disgust but my retort is interrupted by another voice.

"Right kids, I'd best be off now. I should be home about ten, okay? It won't last long." Autumn says from the doorway. Her normally wild frizz is tamed back into a fancy topknot, matching perfectly with her stilettos and pencil skirt: she looks like a woman on a mission. She leans forward to kiss Eulyric on the head, and ruffles Blayke's hair. "Blayke will help you get Eulyric to bed in about half an hour- it's almost her bed time, bless her. Then I guess you and him can watch a movie or something until I get back. Thanks for doing this Rosalina," She says gratefully as she slams the front door behind her.

Silence echoes her departure for a second, before Blayke snaps into action by turning the TV on. Immediately a loud burst of music blares through the speakers around the room, and we all jump a mile from our seats, hearts jump starting in shock. It's only after a second's hesitation that all goes quiet once more as Blayke presses the mute button in a rush. I turn to face him with a scowl, my heart still beating rapidly from the shock. "Nice one, Moonlight."

Blayke puts his hands in the air in surrender, a sheepish smile curving his lips. "Not my fault."

I roll my eyes and turn to Eulyric, who still looks a little stunned from the incident. "Hey Eulyric, are you okay?"

I'm surprised to say the least when she bursts into tears. "I want m-m-mommy!" She wails, clutching her teddy in a death grip. Shit. I turn to Blayke in panic, and my expression is mirrored in his features. Well- he's going to be no help whatsoever then. I dart towards Eulyric and scoop her up into my arms, rocking her awkwardly as she sobs. "Blayke," I hiss, "Go and fetch some tissues, and her favourite candy or something."

"Which one is her favourite?" He panics. If I didn't have a screaming baby in my arms, I would probably find this situation hilarious and laugh at Blayke for hours. But I do have a screaming baby in my arms- and so the sheer amusement of this situation is masked by my own panic. Does she suffer from parent withdrawal or was it just shock? Is that why Autumn won't leave her with Blayke on his own? If that is the reason, then I completely sympathise- Blayke doesn't seem to have a clue. How could everything go so wrong so quickly?



"Shh baby, shhh," I coo in her ear, "It's going to be alright. Mommy will be home soon, okay?" She calms down the tiniest fraction at this, but still continues to cry noisily into my tee shirt. After rocking back and forth for another thirty seconds to no avail- I try different tactics. I heave us both up from the floor and walk around, stroking her hair and murmuring sweet nothings in her ear. "Hey Eulyric, I've got a special cupcake in my bag all for you. Would you like it?"

I'm not sure if she didn't hear me at first or whether she was contemplating the offer, but it takes her a few seconds to nod into my neck. Tears flow freely down my shoulder, but the once body wracking sobs have calmed now and I couldn't be more grateful. I sit down on the couch, Eulyric still clinging to me, and pull the cupcake from my box. "Take a look at this Eulyric." I whisper. She pulls away slowly, revealing a tear stained face which breaks my heart into a million tiny pieces. She visibly brightens at the sight of the treat though, and looks to me for permission before taking the cupcake and snuggling back into my arms. Every now and then, she hiccups with tears or takes a gasp for air- still recovering from the after effects of her breakdown.

"I have tissues!" Blayke jogs into the room, still in a rushed state. "I wasn't sure which candy she liked though, so I brought a load of different ones. " He stiffens when he sees us on the couch- Eulyric licking the icing off a cupcake, and shooting him piercing death glares. "Aw," He moans loudly, "Who brought the cupcake?"

"That's a very good question. Who brought the tissues when I needed them? Hmmâ€¦the answer to that would have to beâ€¦Nobody." I stare pointedly at Blayke, eyebrows raised.

"I'm not your bloody maid service, Star." Blayke grunts moodily, "I panicked. You can't blame me for that." I sigh at this and turn back to Eulyric. Her lavender eyelids are already drooping drowsily and she's snuggled up into my arms in a way that I can't help but grin at. "I've got to get this little one to bed." Slowly and carefully, I straighten up with Eulyric in my arms, only wobbling slightly. She watches me through half closed eyelids, her lips forming a weak smile despite her sleepiness. The cupcake wrapper is clutched into her tiny fist.

"Eulyric's bedroom is second on the left." Blayke calls behind me.

Jerk. Could he not offer to help me? It's pretty damn obvious that I'm struggling under the weight. I roll my eyes and obediently begin to carry an already half-asleep Eulyric upstairs, dodging the toys on the steps as best I can.

Eulyric's bedroom can be described in one word and one word only: pink. Pink curtains, rosy pink wallpaper and matching pink carpets- the list goes on and on. Her bed is a giant canopy palace bunk bed, and her wardrobe is a matching ivory with pink detailing. I head straight for the bed with Eulyric, carefully lying her down on the soft mattress- trying not to wake her from her drowsy state. Luckily, she only stirs slightly as I pull the blankets over her, and then she's lost to the world of dreams.

I take the opportunity to take a look around her room. Aside from all the pink, it is actually really nice- with a small bookshelf filled with fairy tales, a dolls house almost as big as me and a huge canvas filled with photographs. Curiously, I step towards it and begin to scan through the pictures. Most are of Eulyric as a baby, Eulyric in the Wind Kingdom etc. Almost like a timeline. However, there's a distinct one in the centre which prominently catches my eye as different. "Is that Blayke?" I breathe aloud.

The picture is gorgeous, without a doubt. It's a professional white studio photograph taken of the two siblings. A younger version of Eulyric is giggling and pulling on Blayke's gelled locks. She looks around the age of one, her chocolate ringlets pulled into two cute bunches on either side of her head. As for Blayke- he looks adorable at the age of 14. His toothy grin radiates an angelic aura, and he has a basketball clutched in his grasp. The photo is perfect.

Quietly, I exit the bedroom and head back downstairs, still quite in awe at what I've just seen.

"Yo Star, do you want anything from the Chinese?" Blayke greets me at the bottom of the stairs, his eyes averted to the slim cell phone in his hands. Definitely expensive. I shake my head, running my sweaty hands through my hair. "Er no thanks," I refuse politely, "I've already had my dinner."

"So that's a Dim Sum for you then? Excellent." He walks back into the living room, pulling the phone to his ear. I trail behind him slowly, my attention caught by the remote left on the arm of the couch. I swipe it up hastily and turn the volume down, so that when I un-mute it, the sound comes on at a reasonable amount of decibels. I collapse into the sofa with a sigh and attempt to watch the television yet my mind is buzzing with activity. \_Why did Eulyric break down like that? Was it just a shock, or does she suffer something greater? How much has Blayke changed since that picture, just a few short years ago? What \_made \_him change so drastically? \_I massage my temples in the hope to relieve the thoughts buzzing around my head like wasps on a high. It doesn't help much.

"I ordered the Chinese," Blayke collapses into the sofa next to me. "So- what do you wanna do, eh?" He wriggles his eyebrows like a pervert, and I hit him softly on the shoulder with a laugh. Blayke can be a real jerk sometimes, but it's nice to know that he actually cares for his sister- the playing surely proved it. Plus, Blayke's reaction to the tears was quite amusing now that I think back on it.

"So- afraid of tears then, are ya?" I tease him, elbowing him in the ribs. He scowls at this and doesn't reply, deliberately ignoring me in his shame. I begin to laugh softly at the recall of it, and after a minute or two he joins me. "It was random, you know? Scared the shit outta me," he shakes his head amusedly, "As for you, Miss Himiko- you were the complete opposite. Who knew you were the pits with kids?"

"The pits?!" I echo disbelievingly, laughter laced in my voice, "Who says that anymore?"

"I do." Blayke replies confidently, lifting his chin up and pouting.

"Anywayâ€|wanna watch a movie?" At my nod in approval, he pauses to smirk, "Let's see how a girly chick like you handles a horror, eh?"

And here is when the clichÃ©s and stereotypes kick in. There's always that clichÃ© stereotype that girls love shopping, dresses, shoes and eat truffles on their period (I mean, I'm sorry, but truffles are nice anytime for me. Not just on my period). However, one of the largest clichÃ©s that really gets my back up is when men deem women as weaker than them- with less muscle, less brain and no backbone whatsoever. And that, right there, is precisely the reason that the mere mention of a horror movie brings an amused smile to my lips.

Oh Blayne, if only you knew.

"Paranormal activity? Nightmare on Elm Street? Five Nights at Freddy's?" Blayne wriggles his eyebrows at me, and I feign a nervous face- bringing my nails to my mouth to add to the authenticity. Judging by Blayne's victorious smirk, it seems to work. "Or perhaps you'd like some final destination?"

Eventually he settles with *Scream*, thinking that \_of course\_ a man in a mask brandished so often in children's Halloween costumes will terrify a weak, sensitive girl like me. I mean, does he know me at all? Throughout the scary movie adverts, Blayne keeps sending me sideways glances- observing my reaction, at which I pretend to be nervous. Then the first scene kicks in, and I begin to mouth the lines as the actors say them.

It takes a few seconds for Blayne to notice but when it does, his mouth drops open in surprise. I still don't look at him of course, only watching in my peripheral vision as my lips curve around the familiar lines. But after a few more lines, the temptation is too much to resist.

\_"Who are you trying to reach?"\_

I send a smirk towards a baffled Blayne as I say this line- his eyes wide and mouth slack in amazement. He watches me, stunned, before finally fumbling for the remote and pausing the film. I turn to face him victoriously, cackling with evil laughter inside. So much for stereotypes. He obviously does not know me well, or pay attention to me for that matter, because if he did then he'd know that I watch horror movies practically every night- and I know most of the lines backwards. *Scream* is not one of my particular favourites (I find it a little repetitive and tedious) but I still know the lines for the first good fifteen minutes of the film, and a few more.

"How did you do that?" Blayne demands.

"Well, I watch movies you see," I enunciate the words clearly, as though I'm talking to a five year old, "And horror is one of my favourite genres. I've watched a tonne of 'em. Test me if you'd like." I smirk at him, and his face hardens in determination to find one which I haven't watched. Good luck to him is all I'm saying.

"Paranormal Activity?"

I yawn as a reply to this one, and his face sets harder if that's

even possible. Gosh, I kind of feel sorry for him- he's not going to get one.

"Insidious?"

"I can quote it backwards."

"Friday the 13th ?"

"One of my personal favourites."

"Saw? Texas Chainsaw Massacre?" Seeing my smirk, he sighs. "You know what? Don't even answer that. I give up. You win." I jump up at this and proceed to do a victory dance- shaking my hips and moving my hands in the Macarena dance. I can sense Blayke watching me with a slightly creeped out expression, until the doorbell rings. "Wow. Quick service." I comment. Blayke rolls his eyes moodily, obviously still upset about my victory and gets up to answer the door. "Don't answer the door Blayke!" I scream in a high pitched girly tone, collapsing into laughter at the sight of his middle finger. A minute later, he comes back in holding a small paper bag of Chinese takeaway.

"This is for me, this is for me and this is forâ€¦" He turns to survey me jokingly, "Me as well. Soâ€¦none for you then. What a shame." He collapses into the couch next to me with a delicious smirk curving his features. I watch from beside him as he eats each tender morsel, before a plan finally pops into my head and my own smirk comes out to play. I would do anything for my food. Just saying.

With a Tarzan cry, I launch myself on top of Blayke and snatch the bag of takeaway, successfully pinning his hands down as I collapse on top of him. He writhes and struggles beneath me, but I've successfully trapped him to the couch. Now, sat on his lap in an awkward slouch, I grab a cushion from beside me and shove it into Blayke's face, muffling his curses and profanities, before leaning back into it. It's actually quite a comfortable position.

"You know what I feel like watching? A chick flick." I declare loudly. Instantly, Blayke's hands are unleashed from beneath me, darting towards my sides and tickling me frantically. A cry escapes my lips and I squirm like I've just been electrocuted, before hysterics follow- my eyes watering with unshed tears of joy. Dammit, I hate being tickled. It's one of my only weaknesses, besides food of course. Helpless against his merciless fingers, my hold weakens and I go crashing to the floor with Blayke following shortly behind.

The bag of takeaway is quickly forgotten as this morphs into a tickling war. He straddles my legs and pins my hands above my head with one hand, his eyes glinting deviously as he leans forward. "Did you honestly think you'd get away with that, Star?" I writhe frantically under his legs, the knowing churn in my stomach telling me that there's much worse to come- and my jaw is already hurting from all the laughing. I don't understand why we laugh when we're tickled- it's not like we enjoy it. Keeping my chin up and maintaining the shred of dignity that I have left, I wink playfully at him.

Unfortunately though, my plan to surprise him and jump back up fails

the moment that I hear a new voice coming from the living room doorway.

"Well, well, well. What have we got here?"

## 5. Revenge is Cool

**\*\*Ch 5: Revenge is Cool\*\***

Blayke and I spring apart instantly, and I land on the floor with a hard thud. \_Ouch.\_ Rubbing my backside, I groan loudly and attempt to shield my cheeks from the laughing boys. Unfortunately, this doesn't quite go to plan because they've already seen, judging by the hoots of laughter. Aw crap. Toad, Luigi and Waluigi seem to be in stitches laughing, and I'm disgruntled to say the least when Blayke joins in with their laughter and gets up to greet them. Do you know what that means? It means I'm sat alone in the centre of the carpet looking like a tomato with four obnoxious guys laughing at me. Yay.

"Well if it isn't bra girl," Waluigi says in a teasing manner, collapsing onto a nearby couch. His eyebrows are raised amusedly, and I shuffle uncomfortably under his suggestive tone. "Looked like Blayke was having fun there." Awkward. How very, very awkward. What they saw as a compromising position was actually a full blown war over food, which I was undoubtedly going to lose. So much for dignity.

"Well obviously," I wink playfully back at him to hide my unease. "Who wouldn't want a piece of this?" Down past the nervous laughter and cringe-worthy jokes however, I am fighting to restrain the blush threatening to explode over my cheeks. That would ruin my nonchalant act completely, and I'm hanging on to shreds of dignity as it is- I don't need further embarrassment through blushing and stuttering.

"Oh I can think of quite a few actually," Blayke crosses the floor towards me and leans against the mantelpiece, eyebrows skyward. His tone is mocking and light, but all I can freaking think about is howâ€|hot he looks standing there. Somehow it makes him even more annoying. Why can't he be ugly? It would be so much easier to hate him that way. Rolling my eyes, I quickly retort. "Multiply that number by 100, and bam you have the number of times that you've broken a mirror."

"That's the best you can come up with?" Blayke shoots back, "Don't deny you want me, princess." He gestures towards himself cockily, and I simply scowl in reply. \_I think he's the hottest guy I've ever hated.\_

"Please. Control your whoremones," I retort breezily as I stand up to brush myself down. My nonchalant act still seems to be going strong: that comeback was quite cool actually. I pull my woolly sweater tighter around my chest, looking up to see all of the guys staring at me inâ€|approval? No, that can't be right. Shrugging it off, I salute them jokingly. "I'm sure you ladies can take care of Eulyric yourselves. You're big boys aren't you? I'm going home."

"Wait," Luigi calls out as I turn to open the door. "There's a party Thursday night. Would you like to go with us?" My jaw slacks in

surprise. They want me to come to a party with them? I'm not sure whether to be flattered at the notion, or whether to be disgusted that their bringing me along to one of their girl raids. Although by the awkward looks and the way that none of them are meeting my eye, I suppose I'm in the minority of girls being asked as friends. I falter slightly and my hand lingers on the front door handle unsurely. What's the worst that can happen? It's not like I'll drink or take drugs, and I don't have to wear any provocative clothingâ€|jeans and a sweater should fit, right? No biggie.

\_You won't know until you try.\_

"Sure," I hum in reply, offering the boys a glimpse of a real smile, before my expression morphs back into my signature smirk. "But I'm expecting a ride." And with one last cheeky wink at the boys, I swing open the front door and step outside into the chilly night.

\_This is it, \_I think to myself. \_This is the final straw.\_

I storm through the corridors determinedly. My glare is sharp and focused, piercing into innocent bystanders who have no choice but to stop and stare as I stalk past. The usual chatter that colours the friendly atmosphere seems to diminish under my livid stance, people parting like the red sea. Good. They don't need to see this. I cross through the emptying canteen, and that's it. That's when I see himâ€|the source of all my fury; the one thing my mind has been focused on ever since six thirty this morning. Blayke freaking Moonlight.

There he stands, the manwhore himself, surrounded by people as per usual (a fact that he is becoming scarily accustomed to).

He looks different today, somehow. It could be his shirt, adorning that perfectly sculpted torso of his. It could be his piercing cerulean irises, darkened with lust. However, I'm betting it has something to do with the slutty blonde parasite (go figure) whose ass is currently in his grip. How romantic.

I come to a stop in front of the pair, unimpressed by the sheer amount of publicity they are receiving, \_and they don't even notice.\_ Who makes out in the school corridor anyway? Public make outs are simply destined to find their way on YouTube, does he not realise that? Then again, I don't really blame him. The bimbo shoving boobs into his face with her belly exposed is bound to cause a little bit of distraction.

"Seriously guys?" I drawl out sarcastically, leaning against a nearby locker and crossing my arms to emphasise my point, "What happened to keeping it PG?" Instantly, they pull away as though only just aware of their audience. A mixture of lusty looks and congratulatory wolf whistles head their way and heck, even Blayke's cheeks tinge pink! Really though? Is it that hard to look around you and notice the camera flashes and whispering? Rolling my eyes, my gaze trails over to the girl, who judging by her smug smirk, wasn't as oblivious to the attention as she let on. What a slut. I look on as she presses one last lingering kiss to Blayke's lips, before walking away with a 'seductive' sway to her hips. I give an unattractive snort at the sight. \_She looks like she needs a hip replacement.\_

However, it's not long until my amused smirk morphs back into a scowl as I remember why I'm here. I turn to the smirking Blayke and grab

his hand- pulling him away from the scene, away from the attention. Honestly, how much attention does he need? Girls throwing himself at him all the time, guys wanting to be him- he's only been here a week! For a second, Blayke allows himself to be pulled away but it's not long until he snaps out of his lusty daze. "What do you want?" He suddenly hisses, yanking his hand back as though mine is white hot and pulling me to a stop.

"Are you kidding me?" I snap back angrily, "You know very well what I want!"

Blayke's face wrinkles with confusion, and I look on- getting more and more annoyed by the second. Does he honestly not know what he's done? Surely he hasn't forgotten the prank. But alas, after a mere second of thought, realisation crosses Blayke's chiselled features, quickly followed by a smirk. "Oh," He states proudly, "That."

"What did you think it was about?!" I ask him incredulously. Despite my annoyance, my voice is tinged with curiosity. How did he not realise straight away? It's not exactly forgettable. He put every piece of underwear I own in my front yard for chrissakes!

"I don't know, you confessing your undying love for me or something?"

"Not going to happen," I deadpan. Trust Blayke to think that.

"So you do love me then?"

"Jerk." I sigh, hitting him around the shoulder lightly. "I want my underwear back. Believe it or not, I was actually in a good mood this morning until I saw my underwear hanging on the tree in the street." He snorts at this and slings an arm around my shoulders as we begin to walk the corridor towards my locker again. "It was a good prank though;" He muses aloud, "Wasn't it?" He turns to me now with a playful spark in his eye, but I remain adamant and shake my head. Unfortunately, when he starts jabbing my sides, it's hard to maintain my moody approach. "Wasn't it?" He persists, jabbing me again so that a small shriek of laughter escapes my lips.

Darting away before he can catch me around the waist, I stick my tongue out. "Worst prank ever by the way. You'll regret it, for sure."

"I think you're forgetting, princess, that I'm the one who is currently in possession of your underwear."

Oops. How did I forget about that? I guess I've just been so caught up in everything recentlyâ€¦

"Whatever asshole." And the world's suckiest comeback goes toâ€¦Rosalina Star! Shock Horror.

"You really need to get a new vocabulary, Star." He teases me, "Jerk and asshole are all you ever call me anymore. My name's Blayke y'know. Moonlight is your special privilege only, so start using it."

"I'm so glad we're on a surname basis," I say sarcastically, but a smile curves my lips. Am I the only one who calls him Moonlight? Wow.

I feel special. I was expecting a load of his guy mates to call him that. I stop in front of my locker and take out my books, suddenly realising how much my mood has changed in the last five minutes due to Blayke. From livid fury, he has somehow manipulated me into a teasing and even a flirty mood. How did he do that?! "Oh by the way," I say casually, grabbing my chemistry book to add to the pile, "I want my bra back."

"No chance." Blayke shakes his head, leaning against the locker besides mine. His gaze draws away from me, and he finally takes notice of the guys on the other side of the corridor. They beckon him over, and he straightens from his slumped position beside me. "I've got to go, Star. But you aren't getting your bra back." He blows me a kiss playfully as he crosses the corridor, "It's totally face book worthy. Just like my post about you this morning."

And just like that, my entire mood flips all over again. "What?" I say in a horrified whisper. "Blayke Moonlight, what have you done?!" My voice upturns into a tiny shriek at the end, met by Blayke's evil chuckles. Oh holy crap, what has he posted?! I only added him last night! He has like, over 300 friends on Facebook dammit! Just as my world is going into complete meltdown wondering what he's posted, someone speaks beside me.

"So, what's going on between you and Blayke, huh?"

I spin around quickly, slamming my locker door shut in the process. Wow. That was actually pretty cool. "Luigi!" I exclaim, "Hi."

"Hey," Luigi replies suspiciously. His eyes flicker over my face, before narrowing further. "Rosalina, why do you look a cross between constipated and excited? It's scary."

Immediately my smile drops, and I raise my eyebrows. "Well I apologise profusely sir for \_trying to look happy to see you\_. Now can you please get your phone out? I need to see what Blayke posted about me this morning- thus the constipated face." Luigi obliges, pulling out (another) sleek and no doubt expensive phone. I mean, are these boys made of money or something? Rolling my eyes, I watch as Luigi opens up the Facebook app, my stomach twisting in unease. I hope he hasn't posted anything too bad. Surely Blayke wouldn't post anything that bad on there would he? I mean he's teasing and jerky, but he's not mean a-oh, who am I kidding? I'm just in denial.

Eventually, Luigi finds the post after seemingly endless scrolling down his news feed. "Here we go," he selects it and passes the phone over to me, his lips curved into a tight amused smirk a- like he is trying to hold his laughter in. Oh god, it's bad isn't it? And as I peer at the brightly lit screen, my jaw slacks in horror, because there, there posted in cyberspace for endless amounts of people to see a- is a picture of me asleep.

**\*\*Blayke Moonlight:\*\***

\_That drool is simply adorable I must say ;)\_

I stare in horror at the screen. The picture is quite possibly the worst I've ever seen of me. I look like a cavewoman. My hair is wild and spread all over the pillow in a fiery auburn waterfall of frizz,



my face is pale and spotty and there's a spot of dribble rolling down my chin from the corner of my mouth.

\*\*89 likes. 23 comments. 6 shares.\*\*

As if on cue, the school bell rings for first period- and it's as if the alarm bells in my head have gone off too. Because one minute I'm stood up, and the next I'm on the floor rubbing my head and cursing so loudly I hope Blayke can hear it. Shit! I can't believe he posted that picture of me! I don't think I've ever felt so humiliated. Why would he do this? It's not like I did anything to him! Disbelief is coursing through my veins, along with insecurities and mainly anger. My face is burning with humiliation, and I'm practically pulsing with anger. Oh that's it Blayke Moonlight, if you want to play dirty then so be freaking it! I think it's about time to get that revenge I was talking about.

And Blayke. Poor, innocent Blayke fricking Moonlight won't know what has hit him.

Stage one of the plan: Get my Bra back.

I stare scruntinizingly at my attire in the mirror. My curtains are closed; my room is dark- I am not taking any risks that Blayke sees me preparing myself. Albeit, my outfit is a little cliché|light blue leggings, blue converse and a stripy burglar top that I thought would look cool. But hey, the guys in the movies do it for a reason, right? If I look like I'm going to a third grade costume party then so be it: it's all part of the experience. Cautiously, I tiptoe over to the window and peer through the curtains. In the opposite room, Blayke is shirtless.

Oh holy crap, I think my ovaries are exploding.

JOKING! You know I would never be attracted to that douche. But honestly, they are some nice muscles. He must have worked for ages to get that six pack (and it's very worthwhile). I meanâ€|damn. Shaking my head to clear my thoughts, I internally groan. \_Rosalina, what are you doing with your life? Stop being so damn cliché|, lusting over the boy next door. You need to go kick his ass! \_ That's right. Phase two of my plan: get sweet revenge over the jerk hole. When I'm through with him, he won't mess with me again, that's for sure.

Slowly but surely, I return my eye to the slit in the curtains. It's around midnight now, and I'm not sure how much longer I can wait for him to go to sleep before I collapse myself. Luckily for me, he appears to be stripping for bed. As his hands reach for his jeans, I turn away: cheeks burning brightly. Unlike some girls our age, I am all prepared to keep my innocence. And by that, I mean all of it- seeing a boy in his boxers included.

I swiftly gather my hair in a ponytail and lie down on my bed to distract myself. Now all I have to do is wait another twenty minutes for him to fall asleep before I can proceed with my plan. Now doesn't that sound like fun? Sighing, I look determinedly up at the ceiling in an attempt to keep awake, and prevent my already drowsy eyes from closing. I know people stare at the ceiling in movies and novels, but personally I don't understand what the big fuss is about. At the end of the day, it's just a ceiling right? It's not making me feel any

better.

My nonsensical thoughts are interrupted by the buzz of my phone and my eyes open wide in realisation. A distraction from going to sleep! Why didn't I think of this before? Unfortunately, as I pick up the cell I see it's a text from Blaykeâ€|how did he get my number? I don't remember adding him to my contacts. I stare confusedly down at my phone for a second, before realising the contact is saved as 'Blayke the sexy beast'. I guess that gives me my answer. He must have stolen my phone at some point and added himself.

**\*\*Blayke the sexy beast\*\***

You know, I was wondering something today

**\*\*Rosalina :)\*\***

What?

**\*\*Blayke the sexy beast\*\***

You know they say you are what you eat?

**\*\*Rosalina :)\*\***

Yeah, andâ€|?

**\*\*Blayke the sexy beast\*\***

Well I don't remember eating a sex god this morning

**\*\*Rosalina :)\*\***

-- Really Blayke?

**\*\*Blayke the sexy beast\*\***

Yup.

**\*\*Rosalina :)\*\***

Whatever. Night. :P

**\*\*Blayke the sexy beast\*\***

Night princess ;) x

With a smile, I put my phone back on the bureau at the end of my bed. I honestly don't understand how someone can be that cocky, and yet somehow it adds to hisâ€|charm? No, that's not the word for it. More like alluring auraâ€|he flirts and gets girls caught up in his web so easily. What makes me think that I'm any different? Shrugging my shoulders, I watch through the curtains as his light goes out next door. I'm going to have to be very careful not to be hooked into his trap. After all, he's an expert, and wellâ€|I'm just me. Plain old little me.

And I'm not ready to get my heart broken again.

Twenty minutes later, I'm psyching myself up to jump out of a window.

Sure it's only a tiny gap, but if I fall then I would probably die. Just saying. Taking a deep breath, I climb nimbly over the window frame and stretch out onto the opposite sill. \_Don't look down, do not look down. \_Aw shit, why am I doing this again? I hate heights. Luckily, Blayke left his window open which means that I should be able to climb in without too much fuss. However, as I prepare to launch myself over the gap, I begin to sense the familiar build up in the back of my throat. Oh no, oh no, shit no-

"Achoo!" I sneeze loudly into the silence, freezing in my position. Did he hear that? Crap. Crap, crap, crap. Only I would do the loudest sneeze imaginable right now. I lie still for a few more seconds, but nothing stirs in the room. Thank holy mother fried chicken. Slowly, I prepare myself to jump again- bending into a crouch position and bouncing on the balls of my feet. Taking a deep breath, I make the final leapâ€¦

Surprisingly, I don't land all that badly. I scrape my ankle a little off the wooden frame, but apart from that I land niftily on my toes. Wow, maybe I should pursue burglary as a career. I mean, I totally suit the outfit. I swing myself into his room quickly and land quietly on my feet, pleased with my work so far. \_I've got some awesome burglary skills. Should I be worried? \_Pausing, I take a second to look around me. Blayke's room is painted navy and white with dark mahogany furniture. His bed is plain white, and his desk is cluttered with photos and homework assignments. Much alike to his sisters, he also has a professional photo collage- although his are mostly with (I'm assuming) his old friends. None of the people in the pictures are ones I recognise.

Time to find my bra.

I check all the obvious places first. Under the bed, in his bureau and in his wardrobe. Unfortunately, I can't see anything despite dust balls and deodorant. His whole room reeks of the stuff. It's then I turn to the more unlikely places like under his desk or on his bookshelves, but I can't seem to find it anywhere. And as time stretches on, I feel myself getting more and more jealous of the boy asleep in bed. Ugh, stupid Blayke. If he didn't steal my bra in the first place, then I wouldn't be tired all the time. The amount of sleep I've lost as a cause of him is simply astonishing, and completely and utterly unjust.

I search around the room for what feels like hours, but is actually mere minutes. Maybe he's hidden it somewhere else? Is it in a different room? Or maybe it's under the floorboards or somethingâ€¦ I growl under my breath, frustrated. This is quite possibly a mission failed on the bra front, but at least I can get my payback whilst he's asleep. Hmmâ€¦ the possibilities. What to do though? I could throw a water balloon at him and buck it out of there; I could dye his hair blue or paint his fingernails. However, there's one thing in my peripheral vision that catches my eye. A permanent pen. Perfect.

Gingerly, I grab the pen from the desk beside me and tiptoe back over to Blayke's bed. He looks so peaceful when he sleepsâ€¦ it's like that bad boy aura disintegrates, and he turns back into the adorable boy I saw in the pictures on Eulyric's collage. But I guess everybody changes, and it's time to get my revenge on the changed Blayke. Cautiously, I press the felt to the skin of his upper lip and draw a

long, swirly moustache. Although this idea is really overused, it's the only one I can come up with at this time of night. Pondering for a second, I add the words 'I LOVE ROSALINA STAR' to his forward in big capital letters, nice and bold. What? I'm tired- it's not going to be the most creative sentence I ever write.

I admire my work for a second. I think that's quite a reasonable revenge actually, considering all he's done to me. I mean, he's stolen my bra and hidden it, posted a picture of me asleep on Facebook and hung all my underwear in my front yard. I think it's about time I got a little payback. I quickly swipe my phone from my pocket and take a picture of my artwork. I wonder how many likes I'll get for this baby on Facebookâ€¦

Suddenly, Blayke grunts below me and rolls over in bed. His giant arm swipes through the air, and the next thing I know, my petite figure is sprawled on top of the bed unattractively, scarily close to Blayke's sleeping face. \_Do not move. Do not breathe.\_ Chanting the words to myself internally, I watch through squinted eyes as Blayke shifts again. His strong arm is wrapped protectively around my waist, and he lets out a small snore- completely and utterly lost in his slumber. Whoaâ€¦how can someone be that deep of a sleeper?

Once I'm sure it's safe to move again, I grab for the bedside table and shift my leg back over the bed.

Blayke's eyes open.

He blinks at me. Once. Twice. Thrice. And then it hits him. He jumps a mile back in bed, cursing loudly, and flinging me to the wall in his shock. "Holy crap, what are you doing in my room?"

You see, if he hadn't got marker all over his face at this current moment, it would be a hell of a lot easier to take him seriously. But unfortunately he has. And the truth is that he looks adorable. His hair is tousled and ruffled into the sexiest bed head I've ever seen, his eyes are wide and confused and he has a big curly moustache drawn on his cupid's bow which he hasn't even noticed yet. It doesn't get cuter than that, right? Plus, to top it all off he's blabbering uncontrollably. "Why are you in my bed? Oh please lord, don't tell me we slept togetherâ€¦We slept together didn't we? Crap. I must have been pretty pissed if I don't remember. Er Rosalina, I'm really sorry but I don't remember what happened last nightâ€¦did we use protection? Please say we did. I really don't want to be a dad at this age-"

"Blayke," I gasp out, wheezing with laughter and clutching my stomach. "We didn't sleep together. I'm not pregnant, I promise. Do you think I'd actually lower myself to your standards? Ew no."

Blayke's eyebrows furrow in further confusion and he looks away in embarrassment. "Butâ€¦but then why are you in my room?"

I freeze. "Oh nothing, no reason at all," I chuckle nervously, edging towards the window.

His eyes narrow onto me, "Rosalina, what are you doing in my room in the middle of the night?"

"Actually it's more kind of morning, because it's almost 2am so you know, that's not really night anymore is it?" Taking one look at Blayke's face, I stop blabbering and sigh, "I was trying to get my bra back."

"Dressed like a bank robber?" Blayke raises his eyebrows doubtfully, although that annoyingly irresistible smirk is already tugging the corner of his lips skyward. Great, he's amused by me. I'm not going to get out of this sticky situation very easily. "It's all part of the plan," I grumble lowly.

"You had a plan?" It's Blayke's turn to laugh now, "That's just classic. What did you do, plan out stages?"

No comment.

"Oh my gosh you did!" He's howling with laughter now, oblivious to the noise he's making. I can feel my cheeks burning brightly. I'm fed up of blushing already. Before Blayke and his friends turned up, I've never blushed this much in my entire life. Plus, If he doesn't shut up anytime soon, Eulyric's going to come in wondering what the hell is wrong, and if I'm there: that's a whole lot of awkward my poor stained cheeks can't stand. "Blayke shut up; your mom's going to wake up!" I hiss at him, putting my finger to my lips.

"Oh this is totally Facebook worthy."

"Don't you dare, Moonlight."

Blayke gives me a boyish smile, reaching for his phone and hurriedly tapping his passcode into it. "No!" I hiss, leaping for the cell. If he posts that, my life will be over for good—I try every route possible, but Blayke always seems to find a way to block me, as though it's natural to be able to tap in a status one handed and block a girl with a black belt in karate whilst doing so. If this stays on much longer, Autumn will come in and see me—I need to go.

And this ladies and gentlemen is where I make my exit. I dart towards the window and swing my legs over, not thinking of the danger before I jump swiftly onto the opposite sill, leaving Blayke typing hurriedly in his room. He doesn't even seem to notice I've disappeared. Despite the embarrassment of having yet another status written about me, something makes me think that being caught in Blayke's bedroom in the middle of the night by Autumn will be somewhat worse. Let's just hope I made the right decision, ey? Panting a little, I slide into my own room and draw the curtains, collapsing against the radiator. Now that was an adrenaline rush.

In Blayke's room I can hear Autumn telling him off. I escaped in the nick of time.

As if on cue, my phone buzzes.

\_"\*\*Blayke Moonlight has mentioned you in a status.\*\*\_"

This chick, **\*\*Rosalina Star\*\*** just broke into my room in the middle of the night. She wants me so bad ;)"

Blayke freaking Moonlight, I am going to kill you.

## 6. Party

**\*\*Ch 6: Party\*\***

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Author Note: This is celebration of The YouTuber known as iHasCupquake's birthday <strong>

**\*\*p.s. If you don't like the Story do not read it.\*\***

\* \* \*

><p>I wake up feeling exhausted to say the least. My head hurts, my eyes hurt, pretty much everything is throbbing painfully, yet it does nothing to conceal the wide grin on my face. <em>I got payback on Blayne Moonlight. After every single prank he's pulled on me, I finally made us even. <em>Yes, he posted a dodgy status about me, but I think my various embellishments on that smug smirk of his make up for it big time. I cannot \_wait\_ for school today, and that's really saying something considering I'm&#128|well, me.

Smiling to myself, I launch out of bed and land neatly on my feet (-actually meaning I roll out of bed and face-plant the floor painfully, before getting up and pretending nothing happened) .I could really use a shower and mocha right now. As much as I hate to admit it, I'm still absolutely shattered as a result of Blayne Moonlight and I think that the excitement from my 'revenge' is the only thing keeping me from collapsing currently. I stumble into the bathroom and shut the door, not even bothering to glance in the mirror before running the shower and stepping in.

The liquid cascades down my body, and instantly makes me feel a little bit less cavewoman- which is a nice if foreign experience. I quickly begin to wash myself. As good a mood as I am in, it's still technically a school day and I am going to make both me and Danielle late if I don't hurry the hell up. Yippee for early mornings, eh? I squeeze a dollop of shampoo into my palms and swiftly begin to massage my scalp. I wonder how Blayne's going to react today&#128|surely he won't be too mad will he? He's not that bad&#128|

Oh who am I kidding? Guess I'll be wearing black and blending in with the crowd today.

Hopefully if I hide myself in an oversized sweatshirt, I'll get less attention from the audience of Alec's \_awe-inspiring \_status as well. It's a win-win plan. Undoubtedly I'll get a few confrontations about it, and probably a hell of a lot more weird glances, but it will be manageable. I'll just make up some excuse like&#128|\_I saw a wasp in my bedroom\_. That's reasonable right? I can just use that as my excuse, and say that I jumped into Blayne's room in absolute and utter fear. Besides, even if they don't believe me I have my beautiful artwork on Alec's face, and that's enough to get me through the day.

I exit the shower quickly and wrap myself in a giant fluffy towel. The clock on the wall is saying its 7:15, which means I have about twenty minutes if I want to pick up Violet and actually get there before 8:00am. I dry my hair quickly, leaving it damp and wavy down

my back as I rush back into my bedroom. I'm not really one to plan out my outfit, usually I just throw on some faded jeans and a checked shirt, but I guess today's going to be different. I need to blend in. After two minutes of growling in frustration at the spot on my nose, I throw on a pair of dark skinny jeans and a pale blue oversized hoodie that my cousin left the last time he was at my house. He's the sweetest guy ever, but he lives quite far away which means I've had this hoodie for quite a while now and I'm growing quite attached to it.

Its 7:45am by the time I'm finally ready. Apple in hand, teeth brushed and damp hair hidden under a huge hood, I call goodbye to my mom and leave the house. The warmth of the air is already making me regret my decision to wear a sweatshirt, but I haven't got time to change it. Lindale isn't the warmest place on earth, but in spring and summer it gets fairly hot and today just happens to be a springtime day. Lucky me. I walk over to my car and smile. Unlike some people, I haven't got a brand new mustang or Ferrari or whatever, my car is a simple, if slightly rusted, pale blue Mario kart replicate Circuit Special. My mum bought it for me for my last birthday. I'm still learning to drive it at the moment- the only distance I'm allowed to take is to school, but that's good enough for me.

The car drive to Danielle's house is small but sweet, as always. Living in a small town in the Star Kingdom has its perks I suppose. Heat is just one example, and the short distances is another. I park up neatly on the curb of Danielle's block and look up to see her walking towards me, eyebrows raised. "You're rocking the homeless look sweetie." She coos sarcastically, leaning over in her seat to give me a hug and put a lollipop in my palm. "You look like you need it." I give her a grateful look and unwrap the lollipop expertly, popping it into my mouth and letting the sweetness explode on my tongue. Have I mentioned my slight obsession with lollipops before? Yeah well, Danielle is well aware of it. In fact she carries around an emergency supply for me, just in case the candy store runs out, you know.

"So come on then, are you going to tell me why you're dressed like an arctic hobo?" She asks me as I pull away from the sidewalk. The question was inevitable: Danielle knows me too well. Although my fashion sense is probably dismal to most girls- band t-shirts and skinny jeans, it's not that bad that I'd stoop to wear a men's sweatshirt unless it was an emergency.

"Blayne Moonlight." I reply simply, glancing over to see her reaction.

And just like that she understood. The excitement was clear on her face. "What did you do? How did you get your payback?"

"You'll see."

There are a lot of mistakes in the world. Cheating on your boyfriend, for example. Having a baby at the age of thirteen. Making a spelling mistake or buying the wrong size dress because you hoped you'd dropped a size. Yep, the word 'mistake' can cover an awful lot of scenarios. Perhaps the worse though, are mistakes which inevitably lead you to death.

Like the mistake I'm facing now.

"Who the hell wears a sweatshirt and jeans when it's eighty one degrees outside?!"

"Is she crazy?"

"No, I think she just saw the wrong weather reportâ€|perhaps she saw Ice Kingdom instead of the Star Kingdom?"

Yes, me myself and I made a colossal mistake today. For a start, it's probably the hottest day of the year so far, and I am wearing a hoodie with jeans. For a second, every single person around me is wearing shorts, skirts and tank tops, which means that by trying to 'blend in' and be unseen I have easily just made myself the centre of attention. Thirdly, I'm on the brink of death. My head is killing me from the heat, my hair is dank and sweaty and I'm pretty certain that I'm bright red in the face. I am the walking definition of heat exhaustion.

I, Rosalina Lynn Star, have made myself a prime spot in the limelight and don't think I don't know it.

"That's the girl who snuck into Blayne Moonlight's room!"

"Is she the one that drew all over his face? What a bitch!"

"I know, what did Blayne ever do to her?"

Never mind on the brink of death myself; I think I'm on the brink of \_killing someone. \_Due to my newfound stardom, I've had people coming up to me all day asking why I'm dressed like I am, why I snuck into Blayne's room, did I have anything to do with the writing on Blayne's face? People who don't even know me!

And do you know the worst thing? It's not even lunch period yet.

Blayne's still on the hunt for me. My artwork on his face actually went better than planned, and apparently no matter how hard he's scrubbing, it's not coming offâ€|I suppose that kind of went to plan, though, as evil and masochistic as it sounds. The only downside is that it doesn't seem to be having the desired effect on the population of Princess Peach's High. Quite a few jocks have come up to me for high fives and I've been receiving cheers from guys ever since Blayne entered the high school grounds (looking like thunder I might add) but the point isâ€|it's all guys. The girls have officially declared hate campaigns against me, saying that Blayne didn't deserve this 'bullying' and that he did nothing wrong. Heck, I think one girl even gave him a box of chocolates to help him deal with the 'trauma'. How she got a box of chocolates halfway through the school day, I'll never know.

Needless to say, my day is going crap.

"Oi Rosalina!" I turn around to see Luigi heading towards me with a playful smirk on his face, flanked by Waluigi. "Is there any reason you're dressed like that?" He comes to stop outside my locker and I smile just a little bit. Apart from Danielle, he's probably the first person that has come up to speak to me all day. And I mean actually



Speak to me, not fire questions at my face or tell me I'm a bitch.

"Nope, just for the hell of it," I smile, "How are you guys?"

"We're good thanks," Waluigi replies, "Nice job on Blayke's face by the way. I couldn't have done it better myself." I grin at that, nodding. If Waluigi gives you a compliment on your prank, you should be sure as hell be happy about it: he's the pranking king of our school. Although he makes it obvious to the teachers that it was him, they can never find the sufficient proof to suspend him. I guess that's one of the reasons why he's so popular: he's admired by every student here.

"Thanks, I'm quite proud of it. What was his reaction like?"

"Sick." Luigi interrupts as Waluigi goes to answer. "He came into school looking like thunder and headed straight to the restrooms. All we could hear was him cussing. Now you're both wondering around the school hiding your faces in massive sweatshirts and getting some weird glances because of it. He is going to pulverise you, Rosalina."

"But," Waluigi butts in with a cheeky wink, "We're prepared to help you. You're our friend and you entertain us too much to let go that easily so we're going to hide you."

"Okay," I say suspiciously, "But I have math now."

"Skip it," Luigi nods, "Blayke knows what class you've got. He's outside the door right now with Toad, who's trying to hold him back a little. Either way, if you go to class or you don't, you're going to end up skipping some way. We've got a great place to hide you if you want to survive." He says the last word in a terrifyingly exaggerated whisper.

"Dun dun dunnnn," Waluigi sings loudly, a complete icebreaker. Laughing along with the boys, I shove all my books back into my locker, along with my backpack and slam the door shut.

"Okay. Let's do this."

"You have got to be kidding me."

I stare horrified at the door in front of me. I can already smell the stench of axe spray and male sweat from here. My nostrils are burning, my jaw is clenched and my eyes are wide. I turn to the boys with a pleading expression. "Please don't make me go in there! There's got to be some other place—come on Luigi, please?" Luigi stares down at me hopelessly and shakes his head.

"It's the one place he won't think to look," Waluigi grunts, running a hand through his hair.

"Ugh, this sucks balls." I moan quietly, eyeing up the door. It won't be too bad. I can just not breathe for a while. I'll get used to the smell, and hopefully I won't have a lung spasm and die. It's either this or getting beaten up by Blayke Moonlight. Although I could probably swing a few punches at Moonlight in a fight enough to survive anyway.

"Rosalina?" Luigi snaps me away from my daydream.

"Fine," I say grudgingly through gritted teeth. "Let's get this over with." I unwillingly pinch my nose and open the door, letting the odorous air flood over me. Jeez, how much cologne and deodorant do these guys need?! It's a walking hazard! Oh god, I don't think I can breathe. I'm going to die in here of asphyxiation. Whoopee. "Where do I hide?" I wheeze towards them. Luigi simply rolls his eyes at my exaggerations and points over at the sports cupboard in the corner of the room. I stare dubiously over at it. He can't be serious, right?

"You don't need to hide in there yet though. He might not even come. We'll keep an eye out and let you know if he's coming." Waluigi compromised, instantly flooding me with relief. Words cannot describe how much I was dreading sitting in that cupboard. Waluigi is practically a lifesaver. I sigh and sit down on a grubby bench, later followed by Waluigi. "So what's going on between you and Moonlight then?"

"Nothing. Why do people keep asking that?" I say confusedly, crossing my arms. It doesn't make sense. It's not like we act like anything more than friends is it? In fact we bicker all the time and he tickles me. That's not the kind of behaviour you'd normally pick out thinking 'something's going on there'. I mean, I'm no expert, but that isn't really symptoms of love at first sight is it?

"Well you both flirt like crazy. I guess we're just scared to leave you alone," Waluigi laughs in reply.

"I know right man, did you see that position they were in last time we walked in on them?" Luigi calls out from the opposite side of the room. He's guarding the door, keeping a look out for Blayke I suppose. It's nice to think they're doing this for meâ€|.although they're probably just doing it as an excuse to skive off lessons.

"He was tickling me!" I protest with a huff, "Besides he hates me. Especially after last night's stunt. He wants my bones for bread!"

"Did you just quote Jack and the Beanstalk?" Waluigi asks, eyebrows raised skyward.

Cue nervous laughter. "Ha-ha, noâ€|"

Really Rosalina? That was the smoothest of the smooth. Totally convincing. Why don't you just paint your face blue and start singing smurf songs while you're at it? I mean, if we're going all fairy-tale shit, why not introduce a little bit of Rapunzel? Or Pinocchio?

"Shut up," I mutter under my breath. I'm not sure if I'm talking to Waluigi or myself.

"Er Guys?" Luigi calls from the doorway. My head snaps up at the slight tone of panic in his voice. "There are some dudes coming. Not Blayke and Toad, some guys coming in after their gym lesson. If they see Rosalina in here they're going to flip."

Great. Just great.

"Ooh time for me and my cupboard to get acquainted!" I grumble under my breath, shifting off my comfortable bench and over to the sports cupboard. Dubiously, I remove the door and clamber into the bottom amongst the dirty footballs and team jumpers. It stinks of sweat in here, but at least the axe smell is less strong. I pull the door shut in front of me, curl up into a ball and sit in the darkness, listening. I hope these boys don't take too long changing.

The first sound I hear is the cheers and hoots of a team coming in to the changing rooms. Obviously. Boys are so loud. Do they really need to make that much noise? No. I can barely hear anything other than their stupid hoots. I want to know where Luigi and Waluigi have disappeared to, but I can't hear a damn thing. Where are they? "That was one kick ass game!" Someone yells right next to me, deafeningly loud. Jeez, do they not realise how loud they're being? The shout is echoed by hoots of agreement, and I roll my eyes as I hear the clatter of soccer boots against the floor. I'm going to need a hearing-aid by the time I come out of this cupboard, I swear.

"Guys, round up any borrowed shin pads. I need to put them back in the cupboard."

â€|Please be talking about a different cupboard.

I can hear the sounds of footsteps getting closer, and somehow it deafens out all of the other loud noises. Cringing back into the shadows, I find myself holding my breath: as if that will make any difference. I knew this was a stupid idea. Why didn't I just hide in the girl's bathrooms? That idea is so much smarter. Blayke wouldn't be prepared to lose any more dignity by going in there, I'd be safe. Ugh, I hate Luigi and Waluigi for doing this. The footsteps stop outside of the cupboard and I can see the shin pad box being placed down through the gaps in the lining.

The underlying sense of panic is rushing in now. Crap, crap, crap. Why me? What did I ever do to deserve this? It's going to spread around the room like wildfire, and I will be a laughing stock. Crap!

And just like that, all my panicking is replaced by downright fear. The door swings open, revealing a load of half-naked, muddy and sweaty guys in a changing room. Light floods the cupboard, meaning even the darkest crevices are outright and in the open. They haven't spotted me yet, but it won't be long. I peer up, wincing as I see the aghast face of a bulky soccer player staring down at me. His hair is curly and pushed back with sweat, his jaw is slack and his eyes are bulging impossibly wide. Way to make an impression, Rosalina.

"Girl!" He roars, and it's as if everybody in a fifteen metre radius jumps a mile in the air. In less than a second, I've gone from being completely unseen to all but one, to the centre of attention. Havoc ensues as boys turn rapidly to stare at me openly, shrieks of a pitch that I didn't even think was possible for boys are released and guys are jumping around, pointing at me and covering up their junk. I remain curled up, frozen as I stare at the chaos in front of me. I caused this, and I'm probably never going to hear the end of it. I

cuss under my breath, standing up from my position in the cramped cupboard and holding my poor back. Just that simple motion seems to send the havoc into fast forward. Boys are shouting and cussing at me everywhere and quite frankly I'm so overwhelmed that tears begin to prick my eyes. \_Do not cry. That will just make this situation ten times more embarrassing. DO NOT SHOW WEAKNESS ROSALINA. \_"Calm down!" I yelp in the chaos. Where the hell are Waluigi and Luigi?

I spot them out of the corner of my eye by the doorway, wide eyed and waving at me frantically. What are they trying to say? I already know that I'm in trouble! They don't need to panic too!

"What's this about a girl in the changing rooms? Rosalina? Is that you?"

My blood runs cold. Holy crap- and I thought this situation couldn't get any worse. Blayne freaking Moonlight has to pick now to walk in and decide to kill me. The moment where I'm on the brink of tears from shock, I feel completely and utterly exposed and boys are shouting at me with words that are sharper than steel. Now. He officially has to have the worst picked timing ever.

Blayne steps into the changing rooms, and luckily the panic has dimmed a little now. I think every single boy in here is shouting at me to get out (in much nastier wording), but all I can do is remain frozen and stare wide-eyed at him. \_Do not cry. You do not want him to see you cry.\_ Slowly I walk over towards the exit, with Blayne staring me down the entire way. What's the point of hiding anymore? I just want to get out of here. Funny, he actually doesn't look that angry. He looks more curious, and concerned. But why would he be concerned? I'm fine. He doesn't need to worry about me. I won't cry: I've promised myself. I'm stronger than that.

"Gotcha," He whispers, grabbing a hold of my forearm. By this point, his friends have all disappeared; it's only us two that remain. I'm still a little too shocked to fully comprehend what's going on: I follow him without question. He leads me away from the cramped, hot, sweaty changing rooms and back out into the corridor, and it's quite literally a breath of fresh air. No more shouting and cursing, and there's air conditioning out here! Taping a few gulps of fresh, clean oxygen I watch him as he comes to a stop against some sports lockers. "Care to explain why you were in the boys changing rooms Rosalina?"

"Luigi and Waluigi," I reply quietly. My tone is civilised and polite. Maybe if I act polite now and run later, I can get away before he does any real damage. A surprise attack.

"Did I even need to ask?" He chuckles dryly to himself, "Anyway, are you okay?"

His question surprises me, and I don't fail to show it. My head snaps up painfully to stare at him. \_He's not killing me. He actually cares. Why? \_"I'm fine." I say breathlessly, blushing and glancing back down to the floor again. I can't believe it. I'm utterly in shock. \_This, THIS is the guy I saw playing with his little sister. This is Blayne. Not Blayne Moonlight, just Blayne. \_I'm snapped out of my daze when he shifts beside me, and slowly but surely I'm pressed into the lockers. What is he doing? I glance up curiously and freeze. Blayne isn't saying anything, he's just looking. Just looking

at me. "W-wh-what are you doing?" I stammer, my cheeks flaming red. Trust me to ruin the moment.

He begins to lean in.

My heart stirs into overdrive, plummeting against my ribs at a speed I never knew was humanely possible. My breathing hitches in my throat. My lungs are on fire, my pulse is going crazy and my blood feels boiling in my veins. What is he doing?! I don't want to, no, stop this-

He leans right past my lips to my ears.

A breath I never realised I was holding is released as my muscles relax from their tensed statuesque. Thank God. I wouldn't have known what to say if he had have kissed meâ€¦but I'm quite sure that I wouldn't have kissed him back. \_Quite.\_ \_Oh crap, what's wrong with me? However, my muscles don't stay relaxed for long. Blayke's breath tickles my earlobe, reminding me that I am still smack bang in the centre of an incredibly compromising, awkward situation. I await his words nervously. Surely he's going to say something, right? He's not just going to stand there and breathe awkwardly into my ear?

"I'm still going to kill you." Blayke murmurs, and I freeze still. Aah, that probably makes a whole lot more sense. He's doing this for suspense, no because wellâ€¦you know. What a relief. Well, a relief apart from the minute fact that I am probably going to be buried six feet under in half an hour if he's got anything to do with it. I never really did complete that YOLO stage did I? How stupid of me. "I swear to god Rosalina, I will kill you. I'll get you back for this."

It's only when he leans back that I really take notice of the marker pen on his face. It's faded a little, but it's still quite prominent, even on his olive skin. I can see how it's a bit of a blow to his dignity actuallyâ€¦was I a bit harsh? I consider it for a moment. No chance. How many times has he done pranks on me? This was rightful: I \_deserved\_ to pay him back. It's actually quite amusingâ€¦I sense a laugh tugging on the corners of my mouth, but hurriedly try to restrain it. Now is not the correct time for laughing, Rosalina! But somehow, the more I try to restrain it, the more it escapes. It's not long before little giggles are being released. Blayke's face is stone now as he glares at me, and I just can't help it. I burst into laughter, holding my mouth to help conceal some of the snorts and giggles. Oh good gracious Rosalina, you're really in for it now.

"Rosalina!" Blayke's voice is shocked and angry, and it somehow makes me laugh more. "Stop laughing!"

"I'm sorry," I wheeze with laughter, unable to look at him for fear of laughing even more. Why am I laughing so much? God, I must look crazy! Why can't I stop? Maybe I really am going madâ€¦considering the possibility of kissing Blayke Moonlight, and now laughing my head off at some stupid marker pen. Maybe it's a shock symptom? Holy crap, I don't know. I'm just embarrassing myself right now. Am I going insane?

"What theâ€¦!?" Toad's voice butts in from beside us, and I look up to see him staring down at both me and Blayke with a slightly baffled

expression. Jeez, I'm freaking everybody out today. Blayke just shrugs from in front of me, his eyes wide as he watches me, the half-crazed girl still laughing like a donkey in the middle of the boys changing room corridor. I can't even imagine what kind of an impression I'm making. Slowly I begin to sober up, and the laughter dies down. It's only then that I spot my escape. I could run right now, when they're least expecting it.

And so, I begin howling with (fake) laughter again, hearing Blayke give an irritated sigh beside me. That's my signal. With one big gulp of air, I make a break for it. I run so fast I'm afraid my legs won't carry me, and that I'll fall over. I can just about hear Blayke's cry of surprise behind me, but it's too late now because the air is whipping past my ears and I'm focused and concentrated on my running, just on my running. Dodging gym teachers and tennis balls, I sprint through the gym as fast as my legs will go, fully aware of Blayke snapping at my heels with his war growls. Damn he's a fast runner.

I rush straight towards the girl's restrooms, seeing my escape. Blayke is mere metres behind me now. I'm doomed, I'm so freaking doomed. In one last burst of adrenaline, I slam straight into the girls' restroom doors and into the beige interior of the toilets. A few girls look up at me in surprise, but all I can concentrate on is catching my breath. I did it! I'm saved! Utterly screwed for skipping class, but saved! I am alive! It's taking all the restraint I have in me not to do a victory dance now, as I hear Blayke cussing from behind the doors. Thank freaking god.

"So Alice, are you going to that party tonight? I heard Blayke's going to be there." The girl to my left says to her friend, adjusting her glasses and pulling up her skirt a little. Of course! The party. Oh budgies, maybe I'm not as saved after all. I forgot about that godforsaken event—do I still have to go? Probably, to my dismay. It won't be that bad will it? Plus I can just call Danielle if I need a lift home. It'll be okay- I can deal with a critical social situation on my own. Alone. Completely.

Oh who am I kidding? Let's just hope that luck's on my side tonight.

"This one?" Danielle asks me for the millionth time, holding up a green dress by its hanger. The detailing is quite cute, but it's tight on the chest area and frilly from there downwards. I'd literally look like a pile of moss if I wore that- it's one of those frumpy designs that I hate. "No," I sigh, flicking over the page in my book. The scene of my bedroom is a warzone currently. With it being Friday night and all, Danielle was determined to come over tonight and help me pick out an outfit for the party. I don't really see what all the fuss is about to be honest. What's wrong with just wearing some jeans and my Transformers t-shirt? I could wear some ankle boots with it and I'd look fine and be comfortable. According to Danielle though, that is a big no-no. A dress is a must.\_

"This one is cute." Danielle interrupts again, hanging the dress against herself and eyeing it jealously. I admit that dress is one of the better ones that I own. I wore it at one of my mom's work-lunches a little while back. It's a simple one shoulder dress in navy. The skirt isn't too short and the ruffles aren't too prominent. I could probably wear that dress, but the stubborn bone I have inside of me is determined not to wear a dress at all, so of course I shake my

head.

"Well that's the last dress that you own so...have you got any cute tops?" Danielle heads over to my bureau, scanning through a few of the tees I threw on top of it in disgust earlier today. "What about this one?" The top is simple, if slightly girly. It's a strapless number in pale blue with a sweetheart neckline and a couple of wide ruffles below the bust. It's alright actually, but I'd have to wear it with jeans. I'm stubborn as hell, and I like jeans, so it's just inevitable. "Okay," I hum and Danielle looks up at me in surprise. "Really? You like it?" That's when the excitement kicks in. Instantly she's searching through my dresser, pulling out my best dark skinny jeans. This girl knows me well.

"Put these on," She throws the clothes at me hurriedly, a ton of demand evident in her voice. Sighing, I stand up and begin to change. These jeans are tighter than my usual pale ones, very slimming and dark. They make my legs look longerâ€in fact, I don't really get why I don't wear these more often. The top is a little harder to get on without losing my dignity completely, but after a little bit of help on Danielle's part we had me zipped up into the bodice. "Wow, that's a major improvement," Danielle raises her eyebrows proudly, "Now all we need is some killer heels, some make-up and a curling iron."

"Maybe some mascara and eyeliner, but no smoky-eye or whatever okay? And as for the heels, okay. I guess since you compromised the dress, I can manage the shoes, but two inches heel tops. Promise me, Danielle." I hold out my pinky expectantly, and she reluctantly wraps hers around it.

"I promise. Don't worry though, we'll get you looking stunning without a dress and heels and Blayke still won't be able to get enough of you."

"That's the reason you're doing this? Dork!" I hit her playfully. She hits me back a little harder, and soon we're in a full blown play-fighting match. Of which I'm winning, by the way. Danielle hits me one last time before heaving herself up and heading straight for my vanity. "Let's get you spruced up and ready for your big night."

A lot of shoes, curling iron burns and scratchy makeup brushes later, I'm finished.

It's time to go to this party.

## 7. Just the person who I want to see

\_\*\*Ch 7:\*\* \*\*Just the Person Who I \*\* \*\*wanted\*\* \*\*to see ?\*\*\*\_

\* \* \*

><p><strong><em>(\*unedited)<em>\*\*

I await the boys' arrival nervously. My ears are strained for the sound of the doorbell; my palms clammy and nails bitten down to the painful limit. The truth is that I'm not quite sure \_why\_ I'm this nervous. It's just a party, right? People go to them all the time and

I bet they don't have to deal with this emotional anxious crap every time they leave. The thing is that I'm not sure if I'm nervous exactly; I just have that annoying little feeling that something is going to go wrong. You know that awkward little buzz you feel in your gut? Yeah, well I'm trying very hard not to listen to it at the moment.

To be fair though, I am going to a house full of drugs, alcohol and horny teenagers. I think I would be even more worried if I wasn't nervous.

Danielle left about half an hour ago: she wanted to get back in time for the next episode of vampire diaries, no doubt. She still hasn't told me the name of her little crush, but she was texting him a bit earlier: I could tell from the smile on her face and her eagerness to reply. I'm not going to lie, I'm a little offended that she hasn't told me who he is yet, but I figure she'll introduce us when she feels comfortable doing so. I guess I just have to wait- she's never kept secrets from me before, and knowing Danielle it's only a matter of time until she blurts something out. It's kind of one of the things I love about her.

Speaking of waiting, Blayke and the boys are late. Only by ten minutes, but I'm afraid that if I sit here much longer I'll have no more nails left to chew, and it will begin to get painful. I know they haven't stood me up or forgotten me- just sent me a text saying they'll be here soon. In fact, I should probably start getting ready to leave. Unlike some people, I don't like to keep others waiting. I stand up quickly and pull my jacket over my shoulders- relishing in the familiar warm scent. It's one of my mum's old jackets, a pretty cargo thing with a furry hood, and I love it to pieces: it smells just like her. I patter into the hall in barefoot, heels swinging from my hands. I can hear activity coming from upstairs- Mario is probably playing video games in the Den. I told him and Mom that I'm going to Danielle's house tonight. It was a pretty lame excuse but I think she bought it. Typical clueless moms, eh?

The doorbell rings just as I'm slipping on my shoes. My head whips up at the sound of the two note melody, and my stomach twists uncomfortably as if in anticipation. But of what? I'm not dressed like a hooker unlike some girls, I'm a firm supporter of Pugs before Drugs and I haven't had a sip of alcohol in my life. I'm not stupid enough to do anything potentially dangerous, so why am I so nervous?

You're nervous that the boys will ditch you, and you'll be all alone.

I grit my teeth as the thought enters my head. No, they wouldn't leave me. They may act like jerks sometimes, but they're decent guys, right? I release a breath I didn't know I was holding, opening the door and teetering in my high heels. I miss my converse.

Flurries of hornets attack the lining of my stomach as I spot Luigi. He stands on the porch, his back facing me. He's clawing at the scruff of his neck awkwardly, facing the car that's now parked at the bottom of my driveway. "So you're the one they sent to collect me then." I roll my eyes from behind him, and he spins around to face me. His hair is styled into effortless perfection, and he wears a crisp blue shirt over some jeans. His eyes widen as he takes in my



appearance, and for a second his goofy grin drops. "Yup. I am said unfortunate soul," He smirks at me, before gesturing to my attire. "I must say though, you scrub up pretty well; it almost makes it worth it. Are you ready to leave?"

"Yup," I smile. Something within me relaxes at the sight of a familiar face. "I'm ready. Am I getting a ride back home as well?"

"Of course," Luigi snorts, "Anything for her ladyship. Now hurry that sweet little ass of yours into the car- we've got a party to go to." I try not to blush at the fact that he called my ass sweet as I shut the door behind me, but it's impossible. Smiling embarrassedly, I follow his lead down the driveway, over to the giant Range Rover parked on the sidewalk. I hear a few hoots as Luigi clambers in, and the music is cranked up really loud. To be fair though, what did I expect for a car ride full of boys? I'm going to be deaf by the time we reach the party. Rolling my eyes, I clamber up into the giant car, struggling with my petite frame to actually reach the step up. I hear a sigh, before warm, firm hands grab me by the waist, pulling me into the car. "Come on shortcake. We need to leave sometime before Christmas."

I flush pink as I slide along the seat, slamming the car door behind me. "Shut up Blayke," I mutter. My hands reach for the seatbelt, but it's too late. Blayke is already clicking it in for me, reaching across my body for the buckle. His hot breath fans my neck, and his hair is so close that I can smell his irresistible man scent- woodsy, masculine cologne that has the hornets in my stomach stirring again. What is he doing to me?! After a second, he leans back with a small smirk on his face. He doesn't meet my eye, but even in the dark interior of the car I can make out a small smirk on his lips. Does he know that he gave me butterflies? I'd die if he did.

"Drive," He says to Toad. The music had been cranked down a little as I got in the car, but Luigi turns it back up again now. The catchy melody of Thrift Shop pounds through the vehicle as Toad presses his foot to the accelerator, and I can't help but hum along a little bit. Even if the song is about drugs, it sure as hell is catchy. As the rap kicks in, Luigi cracks open a beer and begins to glug it down. He then passes it to each boy in turn; each of them drawing from the can like their life depends on it. Eventually the can reaches me and I stare at it. Are they serious? "Why are you drinking before you've even arrived?" I ask them incredulously.

"Lighten up a little bit princess," Blayke says from beside me, "We're just getting in the mood." He shoves the can into my lap and I wrinkle my nose in disgust. I've never really liked alcohol full stop, but beer is just foul. I open my mouth to politely decline the offer, but Blayke interrupts me just as I go to speak. "You're so safe Rosalina." He murmurs, "Come on, just for one night, loosen up with us. You might find yourself actually having some fun."

Danielle's words ring through my mind from earlier.

"Oh and Rosalina?" She calls back to me as she opens the front door. "Have a bit of fun. You really need a break from all the studying." And with a brilliant smile, she bids me adios. The door slams behind her.\_

Blayke called me safe, whatever that means... I'm not sheltered am I? Stiffening a little in my seat, I realise I am. It probably wouldn't hurt me to loosen up every once in a while.

With a loud groan I bring the can to my lips. I take a long, dry gulp of the disgusting liquid, closing my eyes and letting my senses just absorb the experience. Once I've drained the remnants of the can (not that there was much left), I crush it in my fist. Blayke whoops beside me, and the boys join in. Already I'm feeling slightly more buzzed, although I suspect it's more to do with the thrill of breaking the rules rather than the alcohol itself. Who says I can't loosen up? I'm not uptight, and I'm certainly not a good girl (not that I ever was one to be honest) - this is just part of the authentic teenage experience. The alcohol burns my tongue with its putrid taste, but after swallowing the rest of it, I grin like I've just won the jackpot.

So this is what loosening up feels like.

"I'm gonna pop some tags, only got twenty dollars in my pocket. I'm, I-I'm hunting- looking for a come up. This is fudging awesome," I sing along with the music. I can hear Luigi and Toad laughing in the front seats, and Waluigi is texting on his phone- the bright screen glowing upon his chiselled features. I'm feeling kind of happy now, and the nerves have sort of dissolved in my stomach. I'm not going to drink any more- I'm not stupid: I know what I could get like if I drink too much- but at the same time I'm just enjoying the feeling of being a little buzzed. Who can blame me?

"Do you not swear or something?" Blayke asks me curiously, "I've never heard you swear before, now that I think about it." I shake my head in reply to his question, and he leans back a little, eyes narrowed in challenge. "Say 'fuck'."

"No." I shake my head, turning back to the window.

"Say it."

"No. I'm not going to say it just because you told me too!" I scowl at him defiantly.

"Rosie, say it! Come on, loosen up a little."

"Nope."

"It's just a swear word, no-one's going to arrest you or anything."

"No!"

"Aw, why not?" Blayke whines.

"BECAUSE I SAID FUCKING NO THAT'S WHY."

Blayke smirks at me.

Smartass.

Ten minutes later and my buzzed feeling has almost completely

diminished, replaced with the horrible sickly feeling of nerves once more. I was wondering when they'd make a re-appearance. I stare through the window in horror as we pull up in a long gravel driveway. There are people everywhere: passed out on the lawn, dancing and making out. Shoot- it's exactly like they have in the movies, which means I'm probably going to be raped, punched in the face or dancing in my underwear by the end of the night. My hand twitches unconsciously towards my phone. Should I call Danielle?

No. I need to face this at some point in my life; I might as well start now.

"Are you going to exit the car anytime soon kitty?" Danielle drawls beside me. With a jolt of shock, I realise we've parked. The others are all climbing out of the dark car into the lit driveway, allowing me to get a better hold on their appearance. Luigi is wearing chinos and a shirt, his eyes a warm chocolate brown in the streetlights. Waluigi, who has basically been texting the entire car ride, is wearing similar attire, his angel blonde curls are shielding his face from me though. With a big gulp, I jump down from the car, standing dubiously around at my setting. Every instinct is warning me to leave. So many people in such a little place has got to be a recipe for disaster. My ankle wobbles a little as I land on my heels, but I steady myself before I can embarrass myself too badly. Luigi nods at my attire appreciatively, blowing me a flirty kiss. I roll my eyes, but I'm smiling.

"Why, don't you look adorable, kitty." Blayne whispers in my ear. His voice sends a shiver down my spine, surprising me, and I turn around to slap him lightly around the face. He grins playfully at me, knowing that I jumped a mile at the simple sentence.

"Don't scare me like that you dork," I scold him. He winks playfully back at me.

The boys lead me up towards the house, and my eyes widen at the sheer scale of it. Seriously? Are this guy's parent's millionaires or something? I don't even know whose party this is, now that I think about it. Was I invited? What if they didn't want me here? Oh gosh, am I intruding?

"Relax kitten," Blayne says, sensing my sudden shift of panic. The front door is already open, revealing the bone shatteringly terrifying interior. Music ricochets throughout the house, the beats bouncing in my feet as I stare into the pitch black, struggling to make much out of anything. I can see the silhouettes of what seems like hundreds of bodies dancing to the latest club hits in one of the rooms though. In some ways, the hallway that I'm entering now seems even worse. There must be over a dozen couples making out and nearing you-know-what in here. A girl is projectile puking in the corner; her top is completely gone, revealing her underwear glory. Oh my lord.

I tag behind Waluigi as the boys walk past the hallway scene with barely a glance, acting like it's the norm. I, on the other hand, am staring wide eyed in horror at everything. I feel like this party should have an eighteen and over sign above the door. Then again, it's not like I get out much. For all I know, this could be the norm for parties like this one. Shaking my head to clear my head, I follow the boys into the packed living room. Vodka bottles litter the floor

along with hundreds of crushed strong-smelling paper cups that obviously didn't just contain soda. This really isn't my scene. I'm so grateful that I didn't wear a dress tonight- I think I'd have really regretted it if I did, seeing the girls being perverted on in their skimpy outfits right now. Yup, so not my scene.

Toad is the first to split off from the group. Instantly he heads over to a bunch of smoking guys in the corner. I recognise a few of the jocks and jerks from my school. Rolling my eyes, I turn around just in time to see Luigi and Waluigi blending off into the crowd in different directions. A shot of panic bursts through me, and I spin around quickly to see if Blayke is still there, but he's gone. Gone. They've just left me alone! I knew this would happen: I knew I shouldn't have come. "Shoot," I curse, whipping my head back and forth in search for someone, anyone that I recognise. My cheeks flame with anger at the thought that the boys have all abandoned me- they were supposed to be looking out for me. That's what friends do right? Some friends they are. Behind the anger though, something twinges deep in my chest. Hurt.

"Why the long face?" Blayke's voice shouts over the music. Instantly, I whip around to see him standing there casually, and relief floods through my body, quickly followed by happiness. He came back! I'm seriously restraining the urge to bear hug him right now, but that might be a tad awkward, so I settle for a wide grin instead. However, even my grin quickly drops as I notice what he's holding. A cigarette which he brings to his lips, puffing out a sweet and seductive smoke that burns my nostrils. "Is that marijuana Blayke?!"

He stares blankly back at me. "So what if it is?" There's no playful ring in his voice anymore: it's completely neutral and calm. Judging by the defensive edge to his eyes though, I'm treading on dangerous grounds. Obviously I disapprove of him smoking, but the truth is that I haven't known him long: who am I to tell him what to do? I analyse him for a few seconds, before shaking my head and sighing. "Nothing."

A flicker of surprise sparks in his eyes as he absorbs my reaction. I think he was expecting me to blow through the roof in anger, and in all honesty \_I want to\_, but I haven't got a say. It's up to him if he wants to take drugs: it's not like I'm his mother or anything. I watch him dubiously as he leans back, a puzzled emotion evident on his face. He stares at me openly for a few seconds, and I look back unblinkingly. I can't help but wonder what he's thinking about. After a while, he cracks an empty smile. "Good." That's the only thing he says to me, and I've barely had a chance to register it before he's disappearing back into the dance floor.

He drops the cigarette before he disappears.

Something about small fact makes me smile stupidly.

\*~\*~\*

>"Chug, chug, chug, chug!" The crowd cheers around me. I watch aghast as the person standing on the table gulps heavily from the bottle, undoubtedly spurred on by the crowd's support. It's a boy from my school: Morton Koopa Jr to be exact. He's already a bit of an airhead when he's sober but it's like all of his sense goes out of the window when he's drunk. I've already seen him tonight grinding against a table leg, and now he's chugging vodka like there's no tomorrow. That

hangover is going to suck balls.<p>

"Hey." Someone taps me on the back. I whirl around to see Waluigi there, a coy smile on his face. "How are you finding the party?"

"It's alright thanks, how about you?" I grin back at him. My eyes zone in on the lipstick prints on his neck, and I wrinkle my nose a little. Yup, I'm guessing he's been having fun. I wonder what the other guys have been up to. I've seen Luigi and Toad around, but I haven't seen Alec since our conversation and that had to be at least an hour ago. Since then, I've been chatting with a few of the girls from my school, sitting on the sofa and texting every contact on my phone apart from Danielle- I don't want her to know that I've cracked under social awkwardness yet again.

"I've been good. Have you drunk anything at all?" Waluigi asks me curiously. I can't smell alcohol on his breath either now you think about it, so I'm assuming he's the designated driver for tonight. I shake my head in reply to his question, and he smiles knowingly. "You don't seem like the type to drink a lot." Seeing my face, he hastily continues. "That's a good thing you know. It's downright unattractive when girls are off their head on alcohol."

Nice save. I nod in agreement. "Definitely. It's even worse when they \_pretend \_to be drunk. I don't get why girls do that at all."

"I guess it's to try and fit in?"

"Maybe." I wrinkle my nose, "But I'm sixteen, almost seventeen, and I've not once felt the urge to drink alcohol."

"You finished the beer in the car here," Waluigi points out.

I push him playfully. "We shall never speak of that again."

He grins back, saluting me. "So do you want to dance?"

"Sure," I smile, following him back into the living room. The back rooms in this ginormous house are quite a bit quieter, and that's where I've been hanging out, so the loud music is once again a significant shock to my system. I wince as a new track comes up, echoed by the whoops of the dancers. Could they get any louder? Waluigi grabs my wrist, leading me onto the crammed dance floor, and I wobble slightly in my heels. Looking at him now, he's really attractive. Heck, all of the boys are. It's kind of twisted that we all met through some underwear theft, rather than through school or through normal social endeavours like other people. But that reminds me, I still need to get that damned bra back. Stupid Blayke Moonlight.

"Blayke's been in a really bad mood all night," Waluigi comments as if reading my mind. He finally comes to a stop in the centre of the dance floor, ignoring the jostling bodies surrounding us. "Do you know if anything has happened? Last I saw him; he had two girls kissing his neck and the other giving him a lap dance. He's such a manwhore."

I chuckle, although the thought of the scene physically repulses me. "Nope," I attempt to shrug it off, "I haven't seen him in ages." I

put my hands on Waluigi's shoulders and we begin to dance. Let me tell you now, this boy has \_moves.\_ Then again, it's no real surprise to me- I swear he's good at everything. "You know, you're actually a really good dancer. Is there anything you're bad at?"

"I absolutely suck at anything creative," He admits openly. His gaze flickers to our feet, as though he's ashamed of the flaw. "I can't draw to save my life, and although I like writing- I can't write poetry, or stories or anything. Mom and Dad put a lot of pressure on me to be perfect, but I guess I just haven't got the knack for it. It doesn't really matter anyway; I'm the heir to a business, not a storybook."

"But that's so sad," I frown, "Do you really want to run your parent's business?"

"I don't really mind, to be honest. I mean, there are things I'd rather do but I guess I can't really see any of those happening. Besides, I'm good at math and business-y stuff." He shrugs. His eyes are clear with honesty. It's nice to think that he feels he can open up to me. I'm pretty sure most people don't know the reason \_why Waluigi\_ is so perfect, so it makes me feel special to think that he trusts me with this secret.

"I could teach you to do something creative, if you'd like? I mean, I can draw fairly well."

"That would be cool," He smiles back at me. The song changes again, a more fast paced and edgy one blasting through the speakers. Soon enough, I'm jumping and laughing with Waluigi. He's a pretty nice guy actually. I always thought that he'd be a little snobbish, but he's actually modest and sweet. Guess it just goes to show that you can't judge a book by its cover. Just as I'm singing along to Nicki Minaj, however, Blayke comes into the room. His hair is dishevelled, a crude smirk curling his lips upward. Two girls are clinging to him. One of them is whispering in his ear, wearing nothing but a mini skirt that's more like a wide belt and a lacy bandeau. He turns his head to meet hers, and kisses her passionately, hands clutching desperately into her blonde curls. The other girl is running her hands down his chest, sucking at his neck. He staggers under their embrace. I can't watch anymore, and I turn back to Waluigi.

For some reason, I'm incredibly irritated with Blayke. God, he's such a manwhore. Can't he see what he does to girls? He's playing with them, toying with them like toys on a string. He uses them to get what he wants, and then throws them away like a dirty Kleenex before moving onto the next. What about the blonde girl he was making out with in the corridor the other day? She's forgotten, according to the rumours. Danielle said she saw him fondling a red head yesterday. I almost punched a wall when I heard about it. He's such an insensitive jerk. I really shouldn't be friends with him when he treats other girls of my gender this way.

"Hey Rosie, you ok?" Waluigi asks me, his eyes flickering over my face with concern. I nod back, stretching on an elasticated smile. "Cool. Well, I'm going to go and get a drink. I'll see you when I get back, yeah?"

"Sure," I smile, watching him as he turns away and blends back into the crowd. Here I am now, completely alone in the centre of the dance

floor, fudging pissed off at a certain Mr Moonlight who's freaking oblivious over there with his fudging sluts-

"You look a little lonely over there." A voice shouts over the music, breaking my trail of thought. I look up to see Iggy Koopa, one of the nicer jocks at my school. I've spoken to him a few times in English before and he's a genuinely decent guy, unlike some of his cockier mates. He doesn't look like he's been drinking either, surprisingly. I smile up at him. "Hey Iggy."

"Hi," He replies, smiling. His dimples show up strongly on his cheeks. \_I love a guy with dimples.\_ "Do you want a drink?" He holds out a paper cup to me and my throat burns at the thought. All of that dancing with Waluigi has tired me out; I'd kill for a drink right now. I stare dubiously at the cup. Brad's not the kind of boy to spike a soda is he? Of course not, I'm probably just being paranoid. As if seeing my unsure expression, Iggy hastily continues. "It was mine. It hasn't been spiked, don't worry."

"Oh okay then," I smile, taking the cup and sipping from it. It doesn't taste suspicious, just like normal lemonade- although a little warm from the body heat in here. I smile up at him. "Thanks- I'm so parched from all this dancing...Oh, I like what you're wearing." I gesture to his chinos and converse jealously. \_What I would give to be in my converse right now.\_ He smiles back, once again revealing those adorable little dimples. Iggy isn't a particularly 'wow'-looking guy, but he's quite cute. He has mussed up light brown hair and hazel eyes, flecked with green. Attractive but nowhere near as hot as someone like Blayne. Then again, nobody is.

\_Good gracious, did I really just think that?! Maybe this drink really is spiked.\_

I take a few more gulps of the soda. This room is so freaking hot and I'm beginning to feel light headed. "I think I need some air," I say to Iggy apologetically, "Please excuse me." Taking steady sips from the soda and trying not to bump into too many people, I make my way to the edge of the dance floor. I've never liked crowds, but that crowd is just too much I guess.

I quickly find my escape to the edge of the dance floor, looking back on the crowd with nervous eyes. My head is beginning to throb- I think it took a real toll on me, that crowd. It's nice to be able to breathe again though, so maybe I'll calm down here. I take in a deep breath, and in the process lock eyes with Blayne who is sat nearby, surrounded by girls. I attempt to smile, if only a little, but there's no time because he's already looked past me: completely and utterly ignoring my existence. \_Oh no he didn't. What an effing douche.\_

Gosh my head is killing me. I wince as I massage my temple, gulping down the soda like there's no tomorrow. Why is nothing working? I need to go outside, probably. It's just too hot in here, and I haven't drunk enough- I'm most likely just dehydrated.

Staggering to the door, I clutch my head painfully. It's getting worse and worse by the second, how is it possible for a headache to form that fast? Out of the corner of my eyes, I spot Toad. He's sitting with his friends in the corner still, holding a can of beer

which I'd say is probably empty looking at his delirious state. "Toad!" I call for him. The music is too loud. "Toad!" I scream louder, and his eyes snap to mine. By now my mind is whirring, and I have to lean against the wall for support, so that I don't fall over. People are blocking the door. I can't get through. Shit Toad, please come. As though sensing my panic, Toad jumps through the crowd rushing over to me. My head is spinning and my head feels like it's going to explode. I don't understand, I was fine before that freaking soda-

Shit. The drink has been spiked. And with something powerful by the feel of it.

"Hey, hey, what's up Rosalina? Lean against me. What's happening?" Toad asks me manically, wrapping an arm around my waist to support me. \_Stupid fucking Iggy. I'll never forgive him for this. Why would he want to spike my drink? Asshole. \_Oh god, my \_head\_. I moan loudly, and Toad snaps out of his panicked reverie. "Get her outside!" He yells over the music, "We need to get her outside." The people at the door hastily move, probably thinking I'm going to throw up. To be honest, I'm not sure if I will either. \_My head.\_

I stagger through the hallway, supported by Toad towards the back door. The dizziness is slowly subsiding now, but if anything my head ache is getting worse.

And that's when I see him. Standing by the door with an easy smile on his face, as though this isn't the one thing, as though he isn't the \_one person\_ that could blow my mind into oblivion, and shock me to the core.

The last person I expected to see.

"Mr. L," I gasp. Black dots swarm over my vision, and I know I haven't got long before I pass out. The whole world is spinning, and my head feels like it's been ran over by a bus and drenched in acid.

"It's been a while, princess."

And then it all goes black.

## 8. Are you that Sweet?

\_\*\*Ch 8: Are you that Sweet ?\*\*\_

Everybody who knows me will know that I am far from a morning person. Awakening from a serene slumber into a blurred sense of reality is definitely not my ideal, much less what I look forward to. I always kind of envy those people who can wake up and think of nothing but the beautiful possibilities of the day ahead, of what they're going to do and who they're going to see. The word I'm looking for is positivity. These people have positivity in the mornings, and it's a shame to say that Iâ€|well, I am the poker opposite. Me on a normal morning is a sad sight for the eye, but on this awakening? Well this one is different.

Let's just say that I don't usually wake up feeling like I've been hit by a truck. Twice.



I release a loud groan as I open my eyes. I don't think I've ever experienced a headache of such \_ferocity\_ before. It's hurting every single part of my head, from my eyelids to my temples. What the hell have I done to myself, to cause this kind of pain? Well at least one thing's for sure: this isn't the kind of thing that can be taken away with Calpol and hot soup. I groan a little as I straighten up in bed, letting my eyes adjust to my surroundings. And that's when it hits me. The room I am isn't lit with the morning sun. It's completely dark.

And it isn't mine.

"What the hell?" I jump up in the bed, suddenly conscious of my dark and unfamiliar surroundings. It smells like vomit and smoke in here, tingling my nostrils in a sensitive and unpleasant way. The room is pitch black, indicating that it's the middle of the night, but I can just make out a simple beech wood door, with plain walls and carpets. I am sat in a double bed in the centre of said room, swarmed in a white cotton duvet with a bucket beside me, which I'm assuming is for vomit. Luckily, it's empty. \_Where the hell am I?\_

I claw the interior of my mind for \_anything\_, any information as to my whereabouts but I'm coming up empty. I feel a shift of panic in my stomach. How long have I been out? Shoot, mom's going to be so worried! My eyes widen in horror at my thoughts, the panic bubbling tauntingly in my gut. \_I haven't been kidnapped, have I?!\_ I freeze at a sudden sound, my previous panicking completely forgotten in place for sheer terror. "What was that?" I whisper. My voice is raspy and my throat is sore, but I don't focus on any of that as my ears strain for any other sounds. I can just about make out the faint beats of some dance music coming from below me, but that wasn't what I heard. It was more like a person moving around outside the door.

Oh crap. \_Kidnapper, murderer, rapist!\_

There's a loud knock at the door. My scream pierces through the hazy air like a knife through flesh. Painful, shrill and lasting only half a second before freezing up in terror.

"Jeez Rosie, keep it down. They're going to think I'm murdering you or something," Blayke grumbles, entering the room hastily and shutting the door behind him. In the short time that it was open, the music ricocheted around the room at what felt like a million decibels, but that might have just been my headache talking. \_All I can say is thank god it's Blayke \_and \_At least he might have a clue what's happened to me. Blayke \_rolls his eyes at my relieved face before heading over to me, handing me a glass of water and some aspirin. \_So he's not a murderer or kidnapper, and he's brought me painkillers: added bonus!\_

"Thank you," I say gratefully, grabbing the pills in a heartbeat, "My head is killing me. The funny thing is, I don't even remember what happened!" I chuckle dryly, "Do you know what happened? Where am I?"

"You don't remember who gave you that headache?" Blayke questions carefully. His jaw tightens into a knot and his eyes turn steely at the statement. I observe his reaction closely. \_What is he so mad

about? And what's this about someone giving me the headache?\_ I assumed I'd just tripped over the floor or somethingâ€|but if someone gave me the headache then what could have possibly happened that I don't remember? After a second of staring right back into my analytical eyes, he sighs and drops his gaze. His fists remain clenched however.

"Where am I Blayke?" I ask him quietly. My voice is small, and as much as I hate to admit it, scared.

"You're at Wario Wario's party. You haven't been knocked out for long- I'd say half an hour minimum though. I carried you up here when you fainted. Sorry I couldn't be here when you woke up; I had to take care of someone." I notice him unconsciously clench his fists again, highlighting the bruises scarred against his knuckles.

"Did he deserve it?" I ask curiously.

"Did who deserve what?"

"Well you've obviously just beaten the living daylights out of a guy. Did he deserve it?"

"Like you wouldn't believe," Blayke grits his teeth. His gaze strays adamantly away from mine.

The silence is slightly awkward for a few seconds, and I take the opportunity to gulp down the tablets. At least this killer headache won't last for much longer. "So," I sigh, "Are you going to tell me what the hell happened?"

"Yeah, I guess. You fell down the steps on your way back from the bathroom and fainted. That's all." He shrugs it off like it's a simple event, but he's still not meeting my eyes. Something about his nonchalant tone of voice causes me to think that perhaps Blayke isn't telling me the whole truth. The thing I'm confused about however isâ€|why would he lie? I frown, sipping once again at my water and collapsing back into the pillow. "So, a party huh? Did I ruin your night? I'm sorry if I did."

"No, of course not." Blayke finally turns to look at me, and his voice softens a little. "I'll be honest- it was fun playing Prince Charming- y'know, saving the princess and all."

"Ugh, please don't call me that." I groan into the pillow and Blayke laughs beside me, running a hand through his hair. Even in the dark room I can make out the white sparkle in his eyes as he chuckles. Once he sobers up, I sigh. "What time is it then? Will I need to be getting back soon?"

"It's around 1:30," He says, checking his watch. "The others have already left but I can walk you home. Our street isn't too far from here." I smile gratefully at him, swinging my legs from out of the duvet. They appear ghostly white in the dim lighting. It only takes a second for it to dawn on me.

"Blayke where are my jeans?!"

"Ah, I forgot about those. I, y'know, took them off because they were tight and you were complaining about tummy ache in your sleep soâ€|"

He shifts awkwardly, once again not meeting my eye. His hand automatically leans to scratch the back of his neck, the universal sign for boys when they are uncomfortable. I just hope to god that he can't see my crimson cheeks in the dark, because I'm seriously humiliated right now. How many of my undergarments is Alec going to see for chrissakes?! I nod silently as he passes the jeans to me, pulling them on quickly over my bare legs.

"Right. let's go." I stand up, only to have a voluptuous hit of nausea attack my stomach like a thousand wriggling worms. My knees wobble, and I stagger a little under the sudden light-headedness. "Whoaaaa," I breathe. Blayke catches me easily, steadying me as I take a few deep breaths. My headache seems to have multiplied by ten at that simple standing up gesture; I can only hope that the painkillers kick in sometime soon, because no human should have to endure this for long.

"Easy there tiger," Blayke wraps his arm around my waist, steadying me. The dizziness and nausea has faded now, so I give him a quick nod and a smile to signify that I'm ready to leave. Slowly we walk over to the door and open it. Instantly, the music lightly floods over me and I can hear the activity coming from the heart of the house, although it's quite quiet at the moment. I can't even imagine how large this house has to be for me to be able to sleep through the racket coming from downstairs.

I follow Blayke through the corridor and down the stairs, edging past couples in mid-make out and drunken people staggering along the corridor towards the restrooms. Blayke's arm tightens around my waist, his skin warm through the thin material of my top. "Are you sure I fell down the stairs?" I ask Blayke quizzically, "Surely I'd have a bump on my head or something?"

"You were lucky I guess," Blayke shrugs, "Do you remember anything from before the fall?"

I frown, straining my mind to the furthest I can remember to. "Well, I remember the drive hereâ€¦ And I remember speaking to you a little bit, before you disappeared with your sluts." I wrinkle my nose at the memory. I guess it's hard to remember just how much of a player Blayke is when he acts so boyish and teasing with me. I build up an image of him in my mind, and because I don't see him with his ladies much (I try to avoid it) then I guess it just isn't in my picture. Besides, he's a different person with his friends and me. Although maybe I clarify as a friend? I don't know, my head hurts too much to think about stuff like that.

"Blayke, are we friends?" I ask him curiously. I don't really know what we are to be honest. We're kind of in one of those love-hate relationshipsâ€¦ only replacing the love with 'can just about stand each other'. Hm, friends?

Blayke seems surprised by my question, but he plays it off anyway. He stops to squint at me. "Hmm, I guess you could qualify for one of my friends." He teases me, jabbing me in the side. I roll my eyes back at him, smiling. I guess that's a yes then. I'm not sure if I should be as happy as I am about that statement.

Suddenly a devious smile lights up my face as I have an idea. "Oh my gosh Blayke, do you know what we can do when we're friends?!" I stop

him as we walk, squealing a little with fake excitement, "Sleepovers! Face masks! Movie nights! It will be so much fun!" Blayke groans at my enthusiasm, playing along with my joke, and we both crack up laughing. "Can you imagine you in a f-face mask-k?" I ask, exploding into giggles. Oh good lord, I can't even.

"I'll have you know I probably suit them. Anything looks good on me babe." Blayke winks playfully at me.

"Don't '\_babe'\_ me Moonlight," I scoff, tugging him along faster as I spot the front door to the house. I really want to get home and snuggle up in bed. The painkillers are beginning to take the edge off my headache now, but I'm far from feeling okay again. I wince a little at another big throb, rising my hands up to massage my temples. My pain, however, is forgotten as I spot someone else's.

"Mr.L!" I gasp. Mr.L is walking along the hall, looking like he's just returned from a world war. His eye is black, his nose broken and he's walking with a slight limp. "What happened to you?" At the sound of my voice, Mr.L's head snaps up and his eyes widen in horror. Why does he look so shocked? It's just me- I talk to him in English. Surely, I'm not that terrifying! He stares at me for a few seconds, before his head turns back down again quickly and he determinedly ignores me. "Mr.L!" I call confusedly. Why is he ignoring me? "Mr.L!" By now we've reached the hall, and he's walking as quickly as he can in the opposite direction. I'm so confused- what have I done? I turn around to follow him, but I'm stopped before I can even try.

"Come on, Rosie, we need to get you home." Blayke says gently, but with a tone of urgency evident in his smooth voice. I nod and obey, feeling like a small child under his dominant stance. Ignoring the music pounding against my ears and the couples I'm stepping over, I walk down the hazardous stairs and over to the front door. The girl I saw earlier is gone luckily, but in replacement is a boy looking barely the age of fifteen that is vomiting into a plant pot. \_Wario\_ is going to have a nasty surprise when he goes to check his petunias.\_ I roll my eyes and step outside into the chilly night air. The cold hits me like a bucket of ice water.

"Aw shoot," I murmur, hugging my bare arms and waiting for Blayke as he shuts the door behind him. Why didn't I wear something more substantial for this party? I'm certainly paying the consequences for it now. I shiver violently and begin my trek towards the front gate, sensing Blayke shortly to the side of me. Even Blayke isn't wearing anything particularly substantial- a tight grey v neck and some skinny jeans with his leather jacket. Hot, but impractical. My gaze strays over the wrecked backyard. Streamers and paper cups are strewn across the grass in every direction, with people acting like wild animals like they're off the discovery channel or something. It's all very untamed, free and careless. I guess that's why the rebels, the misfits and the bad boys like showing up at parties. It's a place where there are no rules, where kids can relax and have fun without thinking of any other stresses that might be waiting for them as soon as they can get back. It's an escape.

"What are you thinking about so deeply?" Blayke asks me huskily. He's huddled in his jacket with his teeth chattering, and I find myself craving warmth more than ever. I wouldn't even mind if Blayke gave me a hug- as long as I was warmer than this. It's got to be in the minus

centigrade here.

"Nothing much, I just think I understand why so many kids like parties like this one," I shrug. My hands are tucked under my armpits, goose bumps flaring over the naked skin.

"Oh yeah?" Blayke turns to me. His eyes burn denim blue in the darkness, "Why?"

"It's an escape right? An escape from problems, responsibilities. They can just relax, be with their friends and forget everything for a little while," My teeth chatter loudly as I speak the last word, and I hug myself a little harder. I think it finally registers with Blayke that I'm going to freeze any minute, and so he reluctantly unpeels his leather jacket from his torso and chucks it over to me. I nod gratefully back at him. Unlike some girls in movies, there is no way I am denying a chance to warm up. I pull my arms through the sleeves, and relish in the body heat that's still in the jacket. It smells of axe and vanilla, like Blayke.

"I guess to some respects, yes, what you're saying is true," Blayke admits, hurrying to catch up with me. We're walking along the dark streets together now, and I can see him better in the light of the streetlamps. He looks tired. "But then I suppose people go for different reasons," He glances over at me with a small smile. "Take you for example; you wanted to go because you just wanted the experience. Others go for an escape. For some it's just routine."

"So why do you go?" I ask him curiously.

"Because it's where I pick up girls," He answers simply, smirking a little at my disgusted expression. "I could have lied and said that it's for some heartfelt shit reason, but I'm just going to put it bluntly. I'm being honest, after all."

"No shit," I murmur, my nose still wrinkled from the image of Blayke picking up girls. "That's disgusting."

"Ooh naughty Rosalina! Don't use bad words," He teases me; "I'll have to tell mommy!"

"Shut up dork," I punch him in the shoulder. Well, try to. The leather jacket sleeves are too long, and so when I try to punch him it ends up being more like a feeble stroke through the thick leather blocking my fist from its target. Blayke barks a laugh at my pathetic attempt, grabbing my arm and pulling the sleeve back from my hand. My fist is still coiled, but he takes it gently and moves the thumb to untuck it from my fingers. His hands are warm and rough. "You know you can break your knuckles from hitting like that, don't you?" He chuckles softly. By now we've stopped on the sidewalk but he hasn't let go of my thumb. "Put it like this, across the fingers." He steps a little closer, directing my thumb to the correct position. "There you go."

"Thanks," I grin, before punching him properly in the shoulder. He doesn't even wince, but he does nod his head slightly in approval, chuckling as if my violence amuses him. "C'mon let's just get home already."

Once again we continue to walk. Only a few streets left now, but it feels like we're walking in the middle of the bloody arctic and seems to prolong our journey even further. "So," I start, "Where did you live before you came to Lindale?"

"Sarasaland," He replies, "We moved here to be closer to my mum's sister, and my cousin. Mona, if you're wondering," He sends me a sideways pout, clearly remembering when I embarrassed him the morning after I'd met him. That was funny though, even he has to admit. I snort a little at the memory. "You'd like her if you met her," He muses aloud, "I could probably bring you with me to see her sometime. You two would get along well."

"That would be nice," I smile at my feet. "I've only got one cousin, but I don't see him very often. He's from my mom's side."

"What about your dad?" Blayke asks me. His voice is carefully composed, as though he senses he's treading on possibly harmful grounds. I shrug. Maybe he picked up on the fact that my dad wasn't around? "My dad left us before Mario was born," I admit, "I don't really know him or his family to be honest. Not that I care."

"So it's just you, your mum and Mario then?"

"Yup," My throat tightens a little as I say the word.

"Shit."

I stare at the locked door in horror. Of course- mom thinks I'm at a sleepover with Danielle! How could I be so stupid as to forget the keys? I'm locked out for the night! God, I'm so stupid. What am I going to do now? Mum and Mario's bedrooms are at the back of the house. Even if I call for them, they won't be able to hear me. I have my cell phone but it's literally just died on the walk home because I've been texting so much tonight. Oh my gosh, this fucking sucks. Never mind how cliché it is.

"Having trouble there sweetheart?" Blayke calls for me from the opposite porch. He's stood, leaning against the fence and smirking as though he's won the jackpot. I want nothing more than to swipe that smug bastard smirk from his face, honestly. Well, on second thoughts, getting into my house would be nice. I scowl at him, turning back to the door and continuing to fiddle with my hairgrip in the lock. How come they can do all this in the movies, and I'm so dismally failing right now? Surely if you just twiddle with it a little bitâ€¦|

\*\*\_SNAP.\_\*\*

"You know, I hate to be the one to point this out Rosalina, but you're locked out." Blayke's voice shouts from the other porch. I can practically feel the waves of smugness radiating from him. I shoot him the middle finger. "Now, now. That's not a very nice way to treat your neighbour is it?" His tone is thoroughly amused, "Especially when he's about to offer you a couch to sleep on."

"I can't do that!" I shake my head disappointedly. It was nice of him to offer, at least. "What would your mum say?"

"She's not in," He replies. The keys to his house swing tauntingly

from his fingers. "She's gone to a conference and darling Eulyric is staying with dear old grandma for a few days. No-one has to know."

I sigh and deliberate over it for a few seconds. Yes, I'd be a horrible person. Yes, I have school in the morning and I'd have to sneak back home, and Yes- I would be in the house alone with a boy. But it's not like I'd be in his room or anything, I'd just be on the couch downstairs. That's not wrong is it? Too bad my window's locked, or I could sneak back in right now through Blayke's room, but unfortunately mom's very big on locks in our house. She constantly lives in fear of a burglary. It would be like trying to break into a bank.

"Fine," I mutter and storm back down our front yard and over to his. I march up the path smartly, with Blayke's smug stare boring holes into my cheek. \_Ugh, screw him for being so stupidly nice. \_He opens the door and lets me in first, before following and shutting the door behind us. The sound is loud in the silence, much louder to my ears than it probably is in reality. \_I'm in a house alone with a boy. A hot one at that. \_I make my way over to the living room and stand awkwardly, not quite sure what to do with myself. "The couch pulls out into recline," Blayke says from beside me, "You can sleep there. I'll go grab one of my mum's t shirts or something for you to sleep in." I hear him walk away, up the staircase and into the room above. After staring dubiously at the couch for a few seconds, I begin to set up my bed for the night.

Well, I never thought I'd say that I'm spending a night at Blayke's house. Should I be happy?

"Pick a colour!" Blayke's voice shouts from upstairs, interrupting my trail of thought.

I frown at the question. "What? Why?"

"Just do it kitty."

>"Erâ€¦" I scratch the back of my neck, "light blue?"<p>

A second later, Blayke comes jogging down the stairs holding a light blue T-shirt in his hand. He chucks it over to me, before turning around to go into the kitchen. "It's one of mine," He calls back. I can hear the rattling of pans in the kitchen behind him. "Mum didn't have any pajamas- she's taken them all with her on this trip. I know the t-shirt will probably drown you but I figured it's better than nothing, right? Do you want some tea or anything?"

"No thanks," I call back, heading over to the small restroom leading off the hallway. "I'm just going to get changed. Thanks for the t-shirt." I shut the door behind me with a bang, relishing in the privacy. I'm so worn out from that party, you wouldn't believe. Being around people all night? It's a stretch for me. It's nice of Blayke to take me in though. I kind of expected him to help me break into my own house or something, so it was a pleasant surprise to say the least when he invited me to stay the night. Unexpectedly sweet. I smile and head over to the mirror first, cringing as I see my reflection. It's not that I look particularly horrifying as such- my hair is still curled messily and my makeup is intact (smudged but still there), it's just how unhealthy I look. My skin is pasty white; I have bags under my eyes and a bruise on my head, presumably from when I fainted. I need a long hot bath, some pajamas and a few tom

cruise movies to get me through this. Oh, and a \_lot of\_ aspirin.

I change quickly out of my top and jeans into Blayke's t shirt. As expected, it swamps me, coming down to my knees. The shirt itself is a faded black colour, worn and well loved. It feels soft against my skin, and smells strongly of Blayke. \_I sound like one of his latest conquests, I know. I should probably shut up with all the sappy sensing crap. \_I use water to wash off the makeup on my face and unpin my hair to let the curls spill over my back. Is it bad that I actually quite like this t-shirt? It's plain but comfortable. My kind of clothes.

Feeling very conscious of my bare legs, I run back over to the couch and dive onto it in lightning speed, covering my bare skin with a cushion. I haven't shaved my legs in a few days now, and I'd prefer Blayke not to know that I have pins like a freaking cactus at the moment. The bed has been set up already, a reclining couch with a few blankets and pillows thrown half hazardly on top. I have to admit, even the floor looks comfortable for sleep now, and so this is perfect.

"So is that it? You don't need anything else, right?" Blayke asks me from the doorway. I shake my head, beaming at him in gratitude. He offers me a small smile back, before turning to leave.

"Blayke?" I call out after him. My voice is faint and unsure.

"Yeah?"

>"Thanks for everything today. I really do appreciate it."<p>

"You're welcome. Night, kitty."

>"Night dork."<p>

I wake up in the morning feeling a little less zombie-like than usual, which is a bloody miracle for me. My head is no longer pounding (thank goodness) and surprisingly, I think I slept better on the recliner last night than I do in my own bed at home. I yawn, stretching my arms above my head and sitting up. I can hear Blayke crashing about in the kitchen somewhere to my left. I wonder why he didn't wake me? Well, I suppose it's not his duty too is it? I mean, he was nice enough to let me stay the night. I should probably cut him some slack for not waking me up for school. I run a hand through my curls and wipe the sleep from my eyes, clambering out from my warm mess of blankets to go and see what all the fuss is about.

"Have you only just woken up?" Blayke asks me, glancing sideways as I come to stand in the kitchen doorway. He's already dressed and ready, go figure. "You should probably hurry. We need to be at school in ten minutes." He says it so calmly, as if it's the usual for him. Me, on the other hand, well I wasn't expecting that. \_Ten minutes?!\_

"What?" I yelp, glancing hurriedly up at the kitchen clock to see that he's right. I need to pick up Danielle in less than fifteen minutes and I'm not showered, dressed- heck, I'm not even in my own house! "Shit!" I curse, bolting back over to the lounge to grab my stuff. "Thanks for yesterday Blayke; I'll see you at school!" I



barely even leave time to hear his reply before I'm sprinting out of his door and over the front yard to my house. I'm aware that I'm currently only wearing a T-shirt, holding my clothes and Blayke's leather jacket (from last night, it appears) in a strange bundle in my arms, but it's not as if I have a choice. I need to hurry if I'm going to pick Danielle up on time.

Luckily for me, the front door is left open. Mom must be out doing the bins, like she usually does before she goes to work on Friday's. I'm not entirely sure what I would have done if the door was locked, but it seems that luck is on my side for once and I can enter the house without a fuss. I need to be quiet though- Mom and Mario think I'm at Danielle's right now, and I'll probably be grounded if they see me.

I rush up the stairs two at a time, trying to make as little noise as possible whilst doing so. I can hear Jack in the kitchen below me, having breakfast. He'll be leaving soon for school, but elementary starts a little later than high school, so he's on time whereas I am late. \_Late, late, late.\_ Closing my bedroom door quietly behind me, I sigh in relief before dumping the unruly pile onto my bed without a second glance at them. I should probably hand Blayke's jacket and t-shirt back tonight, but I can worry about that later. The first thing I do is fish out some skinnies and a Starbucks tee from my drawers. As much as Blayke's top is comfortable, I can't even imagine what people would say if I turned up at school in a boy's shirt. \_Words that no girl ever deserves to hear, that's what.\_

I glance quickly at my watch. \_5 minutes left! \_My hair still looks decent enough from last night, so I don't need to worry about that. Just brushing my teeth and grabbing my school bag. I must say, I work pretty well under pressure.

Five minutes later, I'm ready. Just. I slip a pair of aviators onto my head, grab my school bag and open my door quietly, peering around the landing to make sure that nobody is there before I make my escape. I can hear the phone ringing downstairs, and my mom heading to answer it. Spotting my chance, I make a dash for it and bolt down the stairs and out of the front door. Once I'm outside, I finally collapse, panting. That had to be one of the most hectic mornings I've ever faced. I don't think I've ever really slept in much before, come to think of it. I'm still horrifically late, but if I leave now, I might not get a detention.

I pull my phone from my pocket, glad to see that it at least has a little charge. I plugged it in whilst I was getting ready, and although it's only two percent charged, I have long enough to text Danielle and tell her I can't pick her up today. I unlock the phone quickly, but stop as I realise a stupid fact. My car is at the garage. I didn't need to pick Danielle up anyway- that was the point of our sleepover last night: so that she could drive me to school! But of course, I forgot all about that when this stupid party came along. Shit! School is destined to start now. I, Rosalina Star, am completely and utterly screwed. I have no car, I look like I've just been dragged through a hedge backwards and my mom has no idea I'm even here.

If you can think of a solution to this problem any time soon, it would be incredibly useful.

No? No, me neither.

"You want a ride?" Blayke calls from behind me. \_Oh my gosh. \_I spin around on my heel, grinning widely at the boy stood next to his motorcycle next door. Without a thought, I run over to him and attack him with a hug. This guy has saved my ass way too many times in the last two days, it's unreal. Blayke chuckles at my grateful reaction, hugging me back a little bit before letting me go. "C'mon. I mean, I'd love to stand here hugging all day, but we'll have nothing to hug about if we don't get to school in two seconds. Hurry your ass up." He swings his leg over the motorcycle seat and gestures for me to follow.

I bite my lip.

Motorcycles. Never really been a fan of the death machines that you could possibly fall off whilst zooming down the motorway at 200 miles an hour, personally. I guess I'll just have to suck it up though. What was that you were saying about me being sheltered yesterday Blayke? I smirk to myself as I swing my leg over the bike, taking the helmet he hands to me. I feel proud, although a little nervous. I don't look at Blayke's expression, but I can tell that he's surprised I climbed on so easily. I suppose most girls wouldn't come near this thing with a bargepole. The thing is, I'm not most girls. Yes, my stomach feels like it's eating itself with nerves and my arms are wrapped around Blayke like vices, but I'm willing to do this just for the hell of it. To live on the edge of life.

I'd also kind of like to cross something from my bucket list, but that's beside the point. The point is-

The roar of the motorcycle engine interrupts my thoughts, and I let out a little squeak as it suddenly begins to move beneath us. This is it- I'm actually riding a motorcycle! A mother trucking bad boy motorcycle! The vehicle roars beneath me, and the next thing I know we're reversing back onto the road. \_Oh god, oh god, oh god.\_ I clutch Blayke for dear life as we turn, and his muscles tense at the touch. With one final roar, the bike kicks into gear and we're off. My hair streams behind me like a banner, the breeze silencing my cries of joy and victory. The fierce wind makes my eyes water, even though I can tell we're not actually going anything more than forty miles an hour. I actually kind of like it to be honest. It's nerve wracking and dangerous, sure, but it's also an adrenaline rush which makes me feel excited. On top of the world.

"This is amazing!" I squeal through the winds, and I can feel Blayke shaking his head amusedly.

I watch, fascinated, as the good old Lindale scenery flashes by me. A hint of the beach, trees, houses, more trees. I think I could probably get used to this.

Unfortunately, the journey to school is only a short one. As we near the school streets, I begin to feel nervous. What will people say if we walk in together? What would they say if Blayke gave me a ride to school? I'm already getting a tonne of hate from Blayke's fan girls just for that stupid prank, I don't want any more. Plus, I don't want to damage Blayke's reputation. Surely he won't want to walk in with me, considering my social rank. I meanâ€¦he's popular bad boy material, and I'm invisible. I don't want Blayke to have to deal with

stick just for giving me a ride here. "Pull over," I decide, tapping Blayke's back to get his attention. He glances back at me, but obediently pulls over to the side of the road. My stomach twists. Once we've stopped, he turns around in his seat, frowning at me confusedly.

I swing my legs back over from the seat and hitch my schoolbag up on my shoulder, handing him back the helmet. "What are you doing? Don't you want to get to school?" Blayke asks me confusedly. I shake my head, looking down at my feet.

"It's not that. I just don't want to walk in with youâ€¦people will think we're together. I don't want you to get stick for walking in with me." I try to explain, but Blayke's face sets in ice as soon as I begin trying.

"Would that be such a horrible thing? If people thought we were together? What if I don't give a shit what people think?" Blayke's voice is cold and unfriendly now, tinged with hurt.

"No that's not what I meant-"

"Whatever Rosalina." He glares at me for a second, before starting the bike and riding away. I look after him helplessly. Oh I really fell into that one. I honestly didn't mean to hurt himâ€¦I was trying to protect whatever godforsaken reputation he has. He doesn't want to walk in with a girl like me- I could ruin it all for him.

I sigh, and begin walking up the street to the school. I can see it in plain sight. I don't even want to think about the day I'm going to have to face when I get there.

\_Way to go, Rosalina. Way to go.\_

## 9. Prince Charming (unedited)

\_\*\*Ch 9: Prince Charming \*UNEDITED\*\*\*\_

It's been kind of hard without Blayke today.

I've spotted him around a little bit, but I think he's avoiding me. He's pretty good at that actually: once today is all I've seen him, and that's a little bit foreign considering how often we normally talk. I saw him making out with another unlucky victim earlier; a cheerleader. I managed to hold my mouth luckily. As much as I want to tease him about it or to scream at her to run while she can, I need to salvage what little I have left of Blayke and I's relationship. I can't afford to piss him off further, although every instinct is telling me otherwise.

Sitting here in Biology, I can't help but let my mind stray back over to the incident this morning, as it has been doing since the accident. I feel absolutely terrible, and I can't stop thinking about it. In all honesty, I really didn't mean to hurt Blayke's feelings. I stupidly thought that he wouldn't want to walk in with me, that I would damage his reputation. I thought wrong. I bite my lip, playing with the end of a very bitten pencil. I really should say sorry, but how do I do it?

In a warped way, I was trying to protect him. \_Like the classic princess charming I am. \_I thought that if I didn't walk in with him, his image would be saved. But I know now that Blayke doesn't give a damn about his image, which makes me smile even though I feel horrible. I was so stupid for risking our friendship over a fear of stick and insults, but that's exactly what I did. He's one of the most popular guys in school, and I'm the girl that gets hated on by his fan girls. What a pair.

As much as I hate to admit it, I don't want to lose Blayke Moonlight. Especially after all he's done for me (excluding the pranks and underwear stealing of course).

I shake my head to clear my thoughts- I really can't be dealing with this right now. I've got a philosophy test coming up next period, and I can't afford to be distracted. For chrissakes, I've been revising for a week and I am not risking this grade over a stupid little fall out. I'm not a straight A student naturally, I have to work hard to get my decent grades, and Blayke is not going to be the cause of a slip up whether he knows it or not. I stare intensely at the whiteboard, trying hard to absorb what the teacher is saying, but I can't help but be distracted by a certain pair behind me.

"Mr Moonlight! Miss Koopa!" Miss Daisy shrieks from the front of the classroom, "I ask you to get your hands off each other and pay attention!" Blayke breaks off from his make out with Wendy to shoot the teacher a smirk, ignoring the eyes of every person in the class. He's sat at the back of the room with Wendy , but something tells me that it's not to avoid attention: they seem to be basking in it if anything. It's for some other reason, and I honestly don't want to think about \_that\_right now. His eyes glint dangerously as he sizes up our teacher, and I swear I can hear the drool collecting in every girl's mouth in this room. Excluding mine of course. He catches my eye for a second, as though he can hear my thoughts, but it only lasts half a second before he's looking straight through me again. His lips return to Wendy's eagerly, and she makes no protest. \_My god, get a room. \_My grip tightens on my pencil.

In the meantime, Miss Daisy has turned purple.

"Stop it! Blayke, you unhand her this very moment!" She marches towards them, a snarl curling her lips. The loved up pair pay no ear to her. A metallic taste fills my mouth, indicating that I've been gnawing at my lip too much. Why won't he just let her go? I growl a little under my breath, frustrated by the situation. He's such a freaking manwhore!

"Get out both of you!" Miss Daisy's shriek is ear-splitting  
"Detention!"

"Yes miss!" Blayke whoops, finally breaking off from his booty call. He lifts the smug Wendy up into a straddling position around his waist, continuing to kiss her as they both leave the class. A sigh of jealousy ricochets around the room. \_He sure does know how to put on a good show.\_ By the looks of it, they won't be turning up at detention, and I think Miss Daisy knows it too, judging by her furious expression. I sigh, and turn back to my studying- eyeing up the words wearily. No use fretting over Blayke right now. I can apologise later, once I've got my assessment out of the way.

God, I'm such a nerd sometimes it's not even funny.

"So how'd it go then?" Danielle asks me through a mouthful of pesto pasta, "How did your test go?" We're sat in the corner of the library again, eating amongst the shelves of paperbacks. Unlike the movies, our library is definitely not a hook up point. Nope. In fact, I don't think most of the populars have even set foot in this room. It houses nerds only, and there aren't even that many of those.

"Okay, I guess?" I say shrugging. "I mean it's philosophy- an easy A. But some of the questions were quite hard, yeah." My fingers stroke the spines of the books nearest to me, but I don't take any notice of the titles. My mind is far too distracted for that. I still don't really know what happened at that party last night, but I told Danielle the best part of what I knew earlier today in Chemistry. She was eager to hear the details, as always, so I think my vague story disappointed her. She was just as confused as me about the whole stairs story though. I mean, how could I fall down the stairs, be knocked unconscious and not remember anything, without the faintest mark or bump on my head? Blayne called me lucky, but I still think he lied to me. Something's just plain off about that story: it's a physical impossibility for me to lose my memory without any indication of a fall.

"That's cool. You'll do well, no doubt," Danielle smiles, taking another forkful of her pasta. Did I mention that Danielle is a vegetarian? Yeah, she wants to be a vet when she's older: she adores animals. Such a softie under that hard core exterior. A moment of silence passes as we both continue to eat, before suddenly Danielle gasps. "Oh!" She exclaims, "I meant to ask you something! I've only just remembered. God I'm so forgetful... Anyway, what are you up to on Friday night?"

"Nothing much, why?"

"Well I have an idea of something you could do." She smiles to herself mysteriously, and my eyes narrow. What's she up to now? I know she's my best friend but that does not mean that I trust her for one second. Anything but. "You see," She explains, "A friend of a friend is looking for a date this Friday night-"

Here we go.

"Danielle, you know I'm not the dating type," I cut in with a moan, "I just want to be single for a while, okay? I'm happy." I shrug, sitting back down against the shelves and leaning my head against the thicker novels. What I tell her is completely true: I'm socially awkward, I don't wear dresses and I'm definitely not the prettiest pansy in the bunch- I'm not really ideal date material am I? Plus, I have all this studying to do and the new seasons of Teen Wolf is starting on Friday: I definitely do not want to miss me some Meowser and Wario Wario. Drool.

"Please Rosalina? Just one date? He's looking for a girl to take out. I could organise a blind date for you twoâ€¦?" She suggests, "Ashley says he's cute as fuck, and he's moved here recently. He wants to get to know some people, and you could really do with a night out every once in a while." She looks up at me with pleading wide eyes, jutting her bottom lip out in a begging notion. I sigh. Maybe it would be good for me to get out again. I mean, I'm a teenager right? I'll only

be this age once. Besides, it would be a bit of fun to date cute guys again. I mean, what's not fun about getting free food and a drool session?

\_But what if it's awkward? What if you don't know how to act around him? What if he's actually really ugly? Or if he rejects you on the spot? What then?\_

I deliberate over the options for a minute longer, but my answer is set in stone whether I like it or not. The excitement is already stirring in my chest. \_I need to get out more.\_

"God, why are you so persuasive?" I groan, surrendering with a scowl of frustration.

Danielle grins wickedly.

"Friday night it is."

"Mom, I'm home!" I yell, dumping my bag down at the foot of the stairs. It smells suspiciously of baking in the house, so I'm betting that mum has made yet another set of treats to fatten us all up. Cake maybe? Cookies? I smile, heading up the stairs to greet her.

"Hi sweetie, how was school?" Mum emerges from her bedroom, ruffled and dusty and wearing a pair of sweatpants. I stare uncertainly at her. What on earth is she doing? "I was just looking through some old photo albums," She explains, reading my face, "It got a little messy though. I haven't seen those things in years." I nod, leaning in to kiss her cheek.

"My day was good thanks, how was yours?"

"It went really well," She smiles, "Autumn and I met up again. She wants to know if you're able to babysit again tonight."

Babysit? After last time? Oh I don't know! "Will Blayke be there?" I blurt out unthinkingly. I regret it as soon as I see a suggestive smile quirking her lips up, her eyebrows rising skyward. \_Uh oh, mom's already butting in where she's not needed. \_I'm just scared that it's going to be awkward, is all. Not anything else at all.

"No, he's going to a friend's house tonight so you're on your own. Don't miss him too much," Mom teases, ruffling my hair. I shove her playfully on the shoulder, shaking my head.

"Don't ruffle my hair mom," I grumble, and she just grins happily back at me.

"Go and do your homework sweetie. We're having spaghetti bolognese for dinner. I made brownies for dessert: you can take some around to Autumn when you go over there, okay?"

"Okay mom." I watch her as she walks away, before sighing.

I need to apologise to Blayke.

R

"Yes man! Fucking pay up," Toad smirks, holding out his hand to a sulking Luigi. Luigi glares up at him for a second. \_Sore loser, man.\_ Serves him right for betting against me. I smile smugly as he pulls out a slim leather wallet, pulling a few crisp, beautiful notes from the pocket and placing them in my hand reluctantly, and then another few into Luigi's. I snatch them up immediately, shaking my head and tutting. "You had it coming there bro. You just wasted fifty bucks on a game that it was so obvious that I was going to win." I smirk. Waluigi and I decided to play a round of foosball. Somewhere along the way, it became a match. Toad bet fifty dollars for Waluigi to win, and now it's coming back to bite his sorry, sorry ass. I don't lose to anybody.

"Oh shut the hell up Moonlight. Waluigi's on the football team, the soccer team and is amazingly talented at practically everything known to man. The odds weren't exactly in your favour." Toad defends.

"I know, guess that's why the girls want me. I defeat all the odds," I wink, "Girls like surprises."

"My man," Waluigi whoops beside me, slapping my hand in a fist bump. Waluigi just rolls his eyes and sticks his middle finger up at me, to which I grin wickedly back at him. At the moment, all four of us are hanging out in Waluigi's basement- like we do most nights after school. I haven't been living here long, but I've picked up on enough to know that Waluigi is filthy rich from his father, even though he never sees the man himself. His basement is like the ultimate bachelor pad: filled with video games, a huge plasma TV alongside shelves of DVD's. Not only is there that stuff though, but there's also a few training machines. I guess Waluigi uses those a lot, he must do to get to the level he's at today.

"So, want to crack open a few beers then?" Waluigi offers, reaching into the cooler for the cans. He passes them along one by one, and I relax as I hold the cold metal in my hand. Gulping down the refreshing liquid quickly, I don't stop until I've drained all the remnants. I've been waiting for this moment for hours: my day has been positively shitty. After Rosalina basically admitted that she's embarrassed of me, I got into a major state of PMSing and it sucked balls. Kat or whatever her name was helped a little bit- a pretty blonde who kissed like a fucking pro, but by the time I was in Chemistry and I saw Rosalina again I really needed a distraction. Wendy was perfect, but I got kicked out of class. When Mom finds out she's going to kill me, and probably spit on my ashes. I sigh.

"What's up bro?" Toad asks me curiously, taking a sip from his own can, "You've been moody since this morning, and you've just chugged that can like it's a life line." The others turn to me then to see what the fuss is about. I shake my head and mutter 'nothing' before turning to Waluigi for another beer. He passes me one without question, his eyes watching me curiously as I chug from yet another can. By now I'm beginning to feel the slightly buzzed feeling.

"Did something happen with Rosalina? She just sent me a text asking where you are. She said she needs to talk to you," Toad says to me. My jaw tightens as the words register. She texted him about me? I don't want to talk to her. Screw being the bigger man. I groan as I realise my thought stream. I sound like a fucking pansy. I should probably go to the restroom to check if I still have a

penis.

"Moonlight, what's happened between you two?" Luigi demands, "Don't keep stuff from us, man. We can help."

"I gave her a lift to school this morning," I scowl in remembrance, "She stopped me early and said some shit about not wanting to walk in with me or something." My grip tightens on the can, collapsing it in on itself a little bit. I know I'm a bad influence scarring her image or whatever, but did she have to make it so fucking painful to tell me?

"Are you sure she wasn't thinking of you instead of herself?" Toad says carefully, "Rosalina's pretty self-conscious, despite what she wants people to think. She probably didn't want to embarrass you."

"But why would she think that?" I growl in frustration. It was my decision to make, not hers. She shouldn't think that: I was fine with walking in with her. Why wasn't the feeling mutual? I feel bad enough for tainting the seemingly perfect Rosalina. After all, if it wasn't for me, she wouldn't have gone to the party and had her drink spiked. I felt so bad that I let her sleep the night at my place: it was probably the least I could do, but she makes me act like a frigging girl. I shake my head to clear my thoughts, taking another few gulps from my can. Ugh, I don't want to think about this.

"I agree with Waluigi. It sounds like Rosalina to do, despite how silly it is." Toad adds thoughtfully. I clench my jaw and run a hand through my hair. \_She's so infuriating. Why would she be that stupid? I thought she was clever.\_ I groan, "Can we please just fucking drop it?"

"Do you like her?" Luigi asks me, propping his feet up on the coffee table, "Is that why you're so angry?" My jaw drops at the question and I give Luigi a blank stare. Is he fucking serious? I'm angry and hurt, and he takes that as me liking her? She's cute and sweet and all, but not my type. Plus, she basically threw any compliment I've ever given her back into my face when she said she was embarrassed of me.

"Are you serious?" I bark a laugh, but it seems a little forced. "My type is leggy blondes remember?"

"It's okay to have a crush, Blayne." Chase replies dryly, draining the remnants of a can. "She's pretty, right? I don't blame you for liking her, if you do that is. Sometimes playing around just gets a little tedious. Maybe you need to settle down." He shrugs. Toad turns to me curiously, absorbing my reaction. I scoff at Luigi's statement, shaking my head furiously. "I don't like her, I've told you! Look, can we please drop it?" I turn to Waluigi, "Pass me another beer bro."

"I don't think you should have any more Blayne. You need to get home, remember?"

I glare at Waluigi, my eyes narrowing into slits. A low growl escapes my lips. These guys get me into such a pissy mood, and now they won't even let me relax? That's it. "Fine," I snarl, "I'll get my own ride home." I hook my phone from my pocket, scrolling down the contacts



until I find a suitable option. \_Peach Toadstool. \_Queen Bee, school slut, however you want to put it. She's hot, definitely, and she slipped me her number in Math on my second day here. Might as well get some use out of it: I could do with a stress reliever. I smirk and dial the number. "Hello?" Her voice comes from the other side of the line.

"Peach? This is Blayke. Want to come back to mine for a while?"

\* \* \*

><p><strong><em>Author Note: DON'T BE A SILENT READER! LET ME KNOW WHAT YOU THINK :) <em>\*&

## 10. Blind Date (Unedited)

\_\*\*Ch 10:\*\* \*\*Blind Date\*\* \*\*\*UNEDITED\*\*\*\_

\_ã^•7 ROSALINA STAR ã^•7\_

"No, no, no Edward! You can't do that to Bella!" I groan, "The clingy bitch will mope for the entire movie if you do." \_Ugh, Bella Swan. You have the personality of a sock. \_I grumble under my breath, taking a few more skittles from the packet. Believe me, this is not how I want to spend my Tuesday nights: cooped up on Blayke's couch, eating skittles and watching New Moon like a love struck pre-teen girl. I'm missing Captain America Civil War for this. Eulyric was in bed before I even arrived, luckily for me, so the only work I need to do there is check up on her every once in a while. Doesn't change the fact that I'd prefer to be at home though.

Blayke wasn't here when I arrived. Autumn told me he had gone to Waluigi's house straight from school, along with the rest of the boys. I sent Toad a few texts, but the message I got from his replies was clear: Blayke doesn't want to talk to me. I guess I royally screwed up this time. I don't know, maybe he just needs a break away from me. I did say something pretty hurtful to him, even if I didn't mean it. I just wish he would've given me the time to explain. I didn't want to hurt him, honestly.

I curl up further into the couch, shoving another handful of skittles into my mouth. My obsession with these things is unhealthy. I should be obese by the amount I eat. Suddenly I hear a noise, like a rattle of keys, disturbing me from my thoughts. Is Autumn home? I freeze, listening again. There's a thud, another jangle and a loud groan. By this point I'm beginning to get scared. It isn't a burglar is it? I wince as another loud bang ricochets throughout the room, pausing the movie and scanning around quickly for a weapon. Something practical I mean, not a toothbrush or something stupid like the girls grab in the films. You know, before they get their insides stewed.

It's not long before the house is completely silent, apart from the noises coming from the front door clear as day. I hold a can of air freshener in my hand, stepping cautiously towards the noise. My heart is in my mouth, my stomach constricting in apprehension. \_If the burglar does anything, I can spray him in the eyes.\_ I try to comfort myself. \_Then I knock him out with a frying pan and call the cops.\_ I take a deep breath as the door rattles again, my hands shaking with nerves. \_I'm like a freaking James Bond.\_ I shake my head, and wince

as the door finally opens. It creaks slowly, torturing me with suspense. I raise the can of air freshener in front of me.

"Hello?"

I scream, spraying the can and closing my eyes. \_Oh my god. \_A voice curses in front of me, and I let out another yelp of fear as they stumble back. I've just sprayed a burglar in the eyes! What if he kills me? I need to dial 911. My heart races at what feels like a million miles an hour, but my feet stay rooted firmly to the floor in fear. "Jesus Christ! What are you trying to do, blind me?" A familiar voice shouts. My heart stops as I realise who it is, my jaw slacking.

\_Oh shit.\_

I open my eyes and sure enough, Blayke is coughing and fanning the air around him blindly, his eyes squinted shut. \_He hasn't seen me yet.\_ With a warlike yell, I catapult up the stairs and into the first room I see, which happens to be Blayke's, seeing as its right across the hallway. \_What do I do? If he sees me then he'll know it was me for sure! \_Crap. I curse silently, diving underneath his bed. His floor is hard and the impact is incredibly painful, not to mention how dusty it is under here, but it's either this or being murdered by Blayke. I know which one I'd prefer. I hold my breath to keep from coughing. \_I feel like I'm in a horror movie, and my god is it terrifying.\_ I hear his footsteps heading up the stairs. "Whoever you are, you better show your face right now, or I'm calling the cops," Blayke's voice threatens as he steps onto the landing, "I'll get your ass landed in jail quicker than you can say 'Guilty'." I gasp a little at this, cringing into the hardwood of the floor. He's going to spot me, it's inevitable, and this is going to be one awkward conversation.

Well any hopes of making up with him are out of the window now.

Slowly, I crawl out from under the bed. \_This could not get any worse. \_My cheeks are painted a furious red. Why do I get myself into these godforsaken situations?! Cringing, I accidentally knock the bureau on my completely ungraceful exit. The noise makes a loud bang and I wince, knowing there's no hope left for me now. No more than a second later, Blayke sprints into the room with a frying pan held in the ready. I stumble backwards, but luckily his eyes land on me before any serious damage is done. "Rosalina?" Blayke's angry eyes become wide and confused, before hardening over again. "What the hell are you doing in my house?!"

"Ooh okay, skipping the pleasantries then I see," I wince at his tone of voice, standing up from my crouch. Blayke just glares at me in reply, the frying pan still held threateningly in his hand. "I was erm, kind of babysitting. I heard these um, noises outside and I figured it was a burglar so I grabbed the y'know air conditioner and-"

"Almost blinded me?" Blayke finishes angrily, "Jesus Rosalina! At least double check it IS a burglar before you spring into attack mode!" His eyes are stormy, and he turns away from me in anger. The muscles are tense in his back, like wires pulled taut underneath his

skin. \_Oh I've really done it this time.\_

"Can I just ask something?" I say in a small voice, "Why did it take you so long to open the door? I honestly did think it was a burglar, the amount of noise you were making." Blayke sighs at my question, turning around to face me with physically drained features. He opens his mouth to speak, but before he has a chance to my mouth decides to explode. "Blayke I'm really sorry about this morning- I honestly didn't mean it like that. It's just I knew that I would damage your reputation if you walked in with me, and I'm quite aware of how big of a status difference there is. I didn't want to embarrass youâ€|I've done it to people before, and it's just painful for them and me both okay? I was trying to \_help\_, do you a favour, whatever. The point is-"

"Rosalina"

"What?"

"I get it. You're sorry." Blayke sighs, "Let's just forget this ever happened okay? It was stupid anyway." My eyes bug out as I realise what he's saying, and butterflies explode in my stomach. I shouldn't be so happy about this sudden change but I am. \_Looks like I haven't lost Blayke Moonlight after all. \_I open my mouth to talk, but quickly close it again and envelope Blayke into a hug instead. \_Actions speak louder than words after all.\_ He chuckles against me, but hugs me back all the same. It's one of those awkwardly sweet moments that everyone cringes at in the movies, but it suits me just fine. Well, until someone decides to interrupt it.

"Blayke!" A voice shrieks from downstairs, "Where are you baby?" >I let go of Blayke as the realisation hits me. That voice is female. Blayke<em> has brought someone home with him.<em> I stumble backwards, heat flooding my cheeks. He's brought a girl back with him, and I was just hugging him. I'm acting like a foolish girl, just another fly caught into the bad boy's spider's web. God, how could I ever be so stupid? He's a manwhore, I need to be careful. As if rubbing it in my face, the girl from downstairs shouts up again. "I got the condoms from the store down the road! Are you ready yet?"

Blayke blushes and stares at his feet, obviously feeling awkward about the exchange too. \_And so he should, Manwhore. \_"I um, should go," I mutter. Blayke's eyes snap up at that, looking pained at my reaction. \_Why pained? \_ I bite my lip and glance at the floor again. "Don't worry, I'll leave through the window."

And without another word, I unlock his window and clamber out cautiously, shivering in the cold night air.\_ He and his stupid condom bitch can babysit Eulyric themselves. I'm done.\_ Ignoring the drop, I stretch over to my own windowsill and jump.

"I'm sorry Rosalina." His voice comes after me, soft and quiet in the evening breeze.

"It's okay." I reply without looking back. "Goodnight Blayke."

The window slams shut behind me.  
>\*\*\*<p>

The next few days pass in a blur, and before I know it Friday has rolled around. Yep, that means that my blind date is tonight. I've spoken to Blayne a little since the incident, but not as much as I usually would. I'm not sure if it's because we feel awkward or whether it's just the way things turned out but either way, I can't focus on that right now. I'm already five minutes late for class because I forgot to set my alarm last night, I can't afford to lose more time or I'll be in detention. Holding my folder above my head to shield myself from the rain, I sprint across the empty courtyard. It doesn't rain in Lindale very often, but when it does it doesn't just rain, it floods. My hair and clothes are soaked, I'm pretty sure my folder pages are wet and I'm late for class. Things couldn't get any better.

"I'm here, I'm here!" I cry as I burst into the classroom, five minutes late. Big mistake. The entire class is working in silence, and my dramatic entrance literally just won me every eye possible in a fifty mile radius. I flush red under the sniggering from the class, taking one wary glance at the teacher before I quietly head to my seat with my head down. No use attracting even more attention. Laughter from the class follows me, and Mr. Bowser's glare burns into the back of my head like a laser. "You're late Miss Star. Five minutes. I expect to be seeing you in detention later on to make up the time: fifteen minutes after school."

"For five minutes tardy?" My mouth drops open, "Sir, you can't do that! I have plans!"

"It'll be twenty minutes if you don't quieten down Rosalina," He grits his teeth, giving me a warning look. Luigi and Waluigi snigger at me from the back row, and I shoot them a glare before turning to the text book. Well, I don't understand any of this. I frown, staring at the figures until they all become a huge mush in my brain. What does any of this mean? Tentatively, I raise my hand. I hear an exasperated sigh come from Mr. Bowser. "What is it Star?"

"I don't understand sir," I say politely, gesturing to the book. Waluigi winks at me from across the side of the classroom. Mr. Bowser growls under his breath, running a podgy hand through his thinning brown hair. He saw the wink, no doubt.

"Waluigi. Here, now."

Waluigi rises, grabbing his pen and book from the desk to come and stand behind me. I can feel his presence, but I refuse to turn him the satisfaction of a glare. "You can help her with this," Mr. Bowser orders, "Go and work with her outside if you must." Waluigi taps me on the shoulder, and I sigh. Ugh, maths. Gathering up my things, I follow Waluigi to the door, shooting Danielle a desperate look. She smiles and winks back at me. What is it with people and winking at me today? My gaze drifts to Blayne at the back of the room. He winks at me an awful lot. I'm surprised to see that he's already looking at me, but not winking thankfully. Our eyes lock, and Blayne's lips twitch into a smile. Mine follow shortly after.

"Are you coming, Rosalina?" Wy asks me, holding open the door. I nod, turning away from Blayne and his irresistible smile and walking into the corridor. "We might as well go to the library, seeing as it's just downstairs." Waluigi explains, and I nod, clutching my books to my chest.

"So what plans have you got?" Waluigi asks me, digging me in the ribs playfully. One minute he's laughing at me, the next he's being all sweet and flirty. I think Waluigi is taking after Blayke.

"I'm going on a blind date," I reply, jogging down the stairs. I glance back up to see that Waluigi's eyebrows are raised and he looks impressed, if a little surprised. Wow, is it that shocking that I actually have a social life? I guess so, seeing as most of the time I don't. Yup, I'm one of those awful people that lie about what their mum has said when someone asks them out, just so they don't have to go outdoors and face people. Don't judge meh.

"Who with?" Waluigi asks me, and I give him a blank look. "Dumb question," He grins, "Forget I asked." We reach the library and I quickly find a seat at one of the studying tables, Waluigi following suit. The maths book lies in front of me and I stare dubiously at it. I hate maths with a burning passion. "So what is it you don't understand?" Waluigi asks me.

I chuckle nervously in reply, "Well you know. All of it?"

Waluigi laughs, shaking his head. "Okay, let's start with the basics then." His finger points me to the beginning of the first page and his mouth opens to speak. I interrupt him by gasping in shock horror.

"Are you calling me stupid Waluigi Wario?" He rolls his eyes at me, muttering 'drama queen' under his breath, but he's smiling. I guess Angel boy has a sense of humor. Good to know. Maybe this won't be so boring after all.

"Okay, so have you ever heard about the rule of Indices?  $X$  to the power of  $5y+6$  you've covered that I assume?"

On second thoughts, maybe not.

"Rosalina, sit still!" Danielle hisses at me, swinging the straighteners to the side so as to narrowly miss my ear. I frown; glaring at the red hot thing like it's an iron waiting to scold me.

Oh wait, look at that. It is an iron that could potentially melt my flesh. What a surprise.

Danielle shoots me a disapproving look, shifting my head so that I face the front again, staring into my moody reflection. "Stay still." She orders me as she moves onto the next layer of hair. I'm already dressed, thank gosh, because we'd be running majorly late if I wasn't. We're late enough as it is, thank you very much. I don't even care about my hair- did it not look nice enough before?

"I'm almost done," Danielle says, as if reading my thoughts. Her dark lipstick lips curve into a small smile at the thought. She's clipped the top few layers of my hair back, creating what she likes to call 'a waterfall'. You'd think I was going to a wedding rather than a date, with the amount she's putting into this. Heck, she's a million more times excited about this than I am. It was a struggle to even get me to go. As it is, I have my doubts.

"Okay, just let me pin the side fringe back and we're good to go," She murmurs to herself, and I roll my eyes whilst smiling. Believe it or not, I'm trying not to complain too much about the hair aspect of things. Especially seeing as she compromised with me on making the outfit and makeup minimalist. All I have on my face is some mascara and coffee eyeliner (The eyeliner was payback for making her wait whilst I was in detention), and I managed to get away with wearing jeans. Skinny jeans, but jeans nonetheless. I could be happier about the metallic top and blazer with heels, but I have the feeling that my ACDC t-shirt and converse wouldn't be appropriate. Might as well let my best friend have some fun if I've got to dress up.

"I think I'm finished," She squeaks. I glance back at myself in the mirror and smile. The hair does look good, even I have to admit. She's somehow managed to make my auburn curls become sleek and shiny, which is a rare sight seeing as I don't even own straighteners. I think I look pretty awesome, by my standards. "Rosalina you look amazing!" She comes to stand beside me in the mirror and the contrast is stark. She's pale, tall and wide eyed with a choppy jet black pixie cut. I'm slightly smaller, with blue eyes and still pale but slightly tanner skin. Two peas in a pod, but complete opposites.

"Thanks," I smile, getting up from the chair. We set up in my bathroom to do the prep for the date. I've never really done this before, so it's kind of exciting getting ready with my best mate, releasing my girlier side for a change. "Where am I meeting him again?"

"The Elephant Bar," She tells me, firmly shoving me a clutch. I peer inside. Phone, purse, lipbalm and house-keys. I think that's all I need, right? Danielle surprises me, suddenly gripping me by the shoulders. My head snaps up, and she looks me in the eye sternly. "Okay Rosalina, listen up. This date is meant for you to have fun, okay? So enjoy yourself. Relax a little bit, and get to know him. Not all guys are assholes, believe it or not. You might get lucky." I snort a little when she says this, and she sighs in reply, shaking me lightly. "I'm being serious Rosalina. Have fun, okay?" She leans in to hug me, and I clasp her back tightly.

"I will," I smile into her shoulder, "Thanks so much for helping me."

She leans back with a wide grin. "You're welcome. Now get your ass over to that date and flirt. Flirt like you've never flirted before. If he's as cute as Ashley says he is, you're in for a good night."

I grin and blow her a kiss as I exit the bathroom, holding my clutch. "You know you're the only one for me," I tease her, and she blows a kiss in reply, packing up her stuff ready to leave. I think Mom's dropping her home, but my mind is too distracted to think about that right now. \_I'm going on a dateeee!\_

The drive to the elephant bar is a short but thought provoking one. I can't believe I'm going on a date for the first time in ages! What if I'm awkward? What if he's not as cute as Ashley says? I bite my lip. These thoughts alone are enough to make my palms clammy and I haven't even arrived yet. The last time I went on a date was with Marth, and that didn't work out well to say the least. He was my first official boyfriend, and he left my heart in the gutter. Sickeningly cliché

isn't it? I frown as the image of Marth pops into my head, an annoying little niggle in the back of my head telling me that I should remember something about him, but what could it be? I haven't seen him in months.

I shake my head. I need to quit thinking about him: I'm going on a date for Pete's sake. I smile a little, rubbing my palms on my jeans. \_I'm going on a date!\_

As I park up outside the Elephant Bar, my stomach twists a little with nerves. \_But honestly, how bad could it be? \_I'm sure it will be fine, and worst case scenario I have to forge a stomach bug and escape ASAP. I might as well give it a shot. I suck in my breath, exiting the car and walking to the entrance of the restaurant. Danielle told me earlier that he's meeting me inside the entrance, just before the check in point. I exhale slowly, straightening out my blazer and walking with my head held high into the restaurant. The music surrounds me instantly, followed by the chatter of customers. I've always loved the Elephant Bar.

I glance around, but by the looks of things he hasn't arrived yet. I'm not sure if I'm glad about that fact or not. I don't think I'm early, he just might be a little late. \_Or maybe he won't show at all.\_ No, no, no, I'm not going to get stood up. That's a stupid thought. He's just a little late, is all.

\_Or maybe not so late.\_

I watch, fighting the urge to drool, as an attractive guy walks through the entrance. His tousled chocolate locks and big brown eyes definitely make him cute. Maybe this is him? If it is then I'm incredibly out of my league, but I'm not complaining. Ashley's description suits him very well. This guy is hotter than the surface of the sun, although I know of someone who's even better looking. \_Stupid, stupid, stupid. Why are you thinking of Blayke right now?\_ The boy looks over at me, offering me a small smile, but carries on walking. A girl with red hair waits for him at the bar, her hand resting on the swell of her stomach. \_Oh\_, she's pregnant! \_Well that's awkward.\_

Okay, so it's not him. I turn back to the entrance awkwardly. Maybe it's that guy-

"A beautiful girl like you should never frown. You never know if someone's falling for your smile." A voice comes from behind me.

\_Oh.\_

I spin around quickly. I wish I could say that the guy in front of me is a dark haired, tall and handsome stranger. I wish that I could say that I've never met him before, and that he was a sweet dark mystery for me to unravel. After all, that's what the concept of a blind date is after all. Meeting a stranger and getting to know each other, no strings attached. The only thing is I don't think I can call this a blind date anymore. The person stood in front of me is most certainly not a stranger.

"Marth?"

And it all comes flooding back. The party. Mr.L. The thing I couldn't remember. Mr.L spiked my drink; Blayke's bruised knuckles. Mr.L got beaten up. I stare at the boy in front of me in horror, my jaw resting comfortably on the floor. Blayke beat up Mr. L for me. Marth moved back to town. My eyes widen as the thoughts sink in. This is way too much to process in one go. I clutch my head, trying to cram the memories and thoughts back into my brain but it's no use. They're bursting out: a flood of all of the things I don't want to remember anymore.

He hasn't changed that much since I last saw him, six months ago. Same steely grey eyes, tousled blonde hair and strong jaw. But the circumstances have changed so much that I can't even describe.

"Hey Rosalina," He smiles.

"I-I think I have to go."

And I run.

## 11. Tears

\_\*\*Ch 11: Tears \*\*\_

"Rosalina wait!" Marth calls after me, but I've taken off sprinting hard and fast. I need to escape. I shove the door open and rush out into the chilly night, dodging diners making their way into the restaurant. I can feel my eyes stinging, but I refuse to cry. Not now, not in front of him. His feet patter behind me, and I know that he's closing in. Stupid damned quarterback. I need to get away, to escape the thoughts worming their way inside my mind. To escape the memories. Does he not understand that? I don't want to see him. It hurts too much, and definitely not for the reason you'd first think.

"Rosalina, stop!" A hand clamps around my shoulder, bringing me to a skidding halt, before I'm forcefully turned around. Marth stands way too close for my liking, staring into my eyes in disbelief, as though he can't believe that I'd want to run away from him. Pah. I flinch away, and hurt flickers in his eyes. Does he not see that he's hurting me just by standing here? "What is it Rosalina? We used to be so close." His voice cracks on the last word, and that's how I know that he feels it too. Her presence. But she's not really here. It wasn't me you were close to! I want to scream at him. Please just leave me alone! "I moved back!" Marth defends, seeing my face, "I need another chance. Please let me in."

"It's too late Marth," My voice comes out a little stronger than I expected, but feeble all the same. I feel fragile. Like a piece of glass waiting to shatter. It hurts so much. Too much. "You're too late. You stamped on the tiny remains of my heart, and then you left. You left. There's no going back now." I turn on my heel to walk away, but he grips onto my forearm to prevent me from leaving. How dare he?! I spin around and shoot him an icy glare, until he finally releases me, looking reluctant. "Don't even try and stop me from leaving Marth! You left, remember? Didn't give a shit about the rest of us. How can you come back now, asking for another chance, after all you've done?"



The guy has the nerve to look ashamed, after all of this time. "I had to! I would have brokenâ€¦I couldn't do it. It was my escape." He won't meet my eye, but his face is scrunched in pain.

"That's right," I whisper, placing my finger in the centre of his chest. "You would have broken, just like the rest of us did. Just like I did. And what did you do before you left? You burnt the remains of my already broken heart, and I haven't heard from you since. Don't speak to me ever again Marth." I release him and take a step back, staring at him in disgust and hurt. I can hear the sob gathering in the back of my throat, but I refuse to give him the satisfaction of crying. \_Be stone Rosalina. Cold, hard, untouchable stone.\_

"I'm joining your school," He frowns at the floor before looking up at me hopefully, "I want to make things as they were. I made a mistake."

I laugh bitterly in reply to that, "Too right you did! It's a shame for you that I'm not one to give second chances. You demolished my trust for you nine months ago, Marth Charlton. Just go back to where you came from and stay there. I don't need you here." And this time, I turn on my heel and walk away, leaving Marth stood behind me with the wounds of my words. I walk as quickly as I can, despite the fact that I know he's not following this time.

"I'll win your heart again Rosalina Star," He shouts after me, "Just you wait and see. I may have screwed up, but I'll make it up to you. Then you and I will be together again. The way it's supposed to be." I don't look back, but my teeth are gnawing so hard into my lip that they're drawing blood. "See you at school!" He has the nerve to shout.

I shoot him the middle finger, before sliding into my car.

It doesn't take long for the tears to escape.

I return home quietly, slipping inside and hoping no-one will notice. It's only about half seven. I got myself back together pretty quickly after my breakdown, but it's clear to see that any evidence of makeup has been completely erased from my face. My hair miraculously stayed intact, but it's not like I'm going out anywhere anyway, so that's just gone to waste. I tiptoe up the stairs to my room, and shut the door with a sigh, slumping against it. The curtains are closed, so I quickly change into a pair of leggings and a baggy jumper. I'm not in the mood for anything at all. Even a little trip from Ben and Jerry doesn't seem appealing right now.

\_Marth. My sister. The girl. Everything is crushing down on me, and I can't breathe. I can't breathe.\_

I choke back the rise in my throat as the thoughts enter my head again, heading over to the window. \_I need some air, I need to breathe\_. We've had enough crying for one night, I think, and it's physically paining me to do anymore. My throat is red raw. I just want to forget all about it. I wish I'd never gone on that godforsaken date. I open the window and breathe in deeply, attempting to calm my senses, distract my thoughts. Isn't that what they do in yoga or whatever? I curse quietly at the situation, closing my eyes and leaning my head against the window frame. A few tears escape down

my face. I can't seem to hold them in. Marth\_. Heaven. Peach. Toby. Heaven. Peach. Marth. Marth is joining my school.\_

"Rosalina?" A soft voice comes from in front of me, and I jump wildly, almost hitting my head off the window. Blayke is stood behind his window, watching me with a concerned and wary expression. \_He doesn't like tears, remember?\_ I offer him a weak half smile, as though he didn't just scare the life out of me, wiping the tears from my cheeks in an attempt at nonchalance. I completely forgot that by going to the window, I'd be giving him a first row seat to my breakdown. I blush and straighten up a little bit. "Hi Blayke. What's up?"

"Seriously?" Blayke chuckles a little bitterly, "Don't even start with that bullshit. What's wrong? Who made you cry?" His fists clench on his windowsill. \_He beat up Mr.L for spiking my drink. He beat up Mr.L for me.\_ His dark eyes search mine endlessly, but I straighten up and try to keep my face blank and void of emotion. The last thing I need right now is to go all hormonal teenage girl on Blayke. Besides, my eyes are dry now. I don't think I could cry anymore, even if I wanted to. "No-one Blayke," I sigh, leaning back, "I've just had a hard night, okay?"

Blayke analyses my face for a second longer. "Put your shoes on. Meet me out front when you're done okay? I want to show you something." And with that, he pulls his window down and disappears from my view, probably leaving his bedroom. I stare after him, confused. Shoes on? Where is he going to take me? Some part of me is pining to stay in and cry all night, eating ice cream (because who doesn't love that stuff?) but I think I'm past that stage right now. I need to be strong, because by the looks of it my life is going to get a hell of a lot harder very soon and I refuse to just lie down and take it. I'm not that kind of girl. Besides, I'm curious as to what he wants to show me. I grab my converse from beside my bed and slip them on, not bothering about the trailing laces. \_I'm going to need to sneak past mom.\_

I pull on a thin jacket and tuck my hair behind my ears, creeping out into the landing again. I think Mum's watching The Bachelor in the living room, and Mario's asleep, so it should be pretty easy. Keeping an eye on where I place my feet is basically the only problem, because we have a couple of creaky stairs, but even that is hard to conquer when you've been living here for years now. I tiptoe down the stairs and into the hallway. For just one second is all I pause for, deliberating over whether I'll get in massive trouble for sneaking out, but the curiosity takes over again and I dash towards the door. Slipping out into the night, I shiver a little before closing the door behind me. Blayke leans against the tree at the bottom of my garden- the one he hung all of my underwear from. "C'mon," He gestures and slopes over to the motorbike.

I blush a little and follow him, sliding onto the seat behind him and wrapping my arms around him without question. I must say, this motorbike is pretty dang awesome, but scary as hell. I constrict my arms tighter around Blayke's torso. \_To hell that I'm risking falling off.\_ The engine starts with a low rumble, and the next thing I know Blayke is reversing out of the driveway and we're speeding off into the dark night with nothing more than a screech of tyres and a roar of the engine.

I watch the scenery quietly on the journey. Streetlights line the road, glowing dimly in the dusk yet still managing to chase away the shadows creeping in on the speeding bike. Everything just looks so much more mysterious at night. Far to my left, I can see a glint of the dark raging sea, crashing against the rocks in fury. I wonder if anyone's on the beach right now. Probably not. There are very few cars on the road, meaning all I can hear is the roar of the bike in the numbing silence. It's actually kind of beautiful, as corny as it may sound. I smile a little and press my cheek against Alec's back to look at the opposite side, feeling his small intake of breath as he registers my action.

It doesn't take long until we've arrived. Around five minutes. "Blayne?" I frown when he comes to a stop, "What are we doing here? Are we lost?" I look around confusedly at the scenery. Blayne has just parked us at the side of a small country lane, running through a forest. There are no cars here, and the streetlights seem oddly far apart, creating an eerie effect on the landscape. It's beginning to get darker now, with dusk settling at around the height of my knees rather than surrounding me completely, like it was before. I can see a few stars, but apart from that it's all trees. Trees everywhere I look. I laugh nervously, sliding off the bike to follow Blayne's actions. "You know, if you want to murder me I just want to let you know that I always carry pepper spray with me."

Blayne raises an eyebrow and begins to walk into the forest. I quickly rush after him, scared of being left alone. \_We all know how that horror movie ends.\_ "If I was going to murder you, it's probably not a good idea to tell me that you have pepper spray." Blayne comments, walking further into the trees. I glance desperately back at the motorcycle, but Blayne doesn't seem fazed by his surroundings. He sends me a short sideways glance and a small smirk, "Scared princess?"

I roll my eyes, refusing to grace his teasing with a retort. I'm focused entirely on where I'm headed, because knowing me, I'll trip over a tree root or something and lose all of the shreds of dignity I still have to my name. I'd hate to see how hard Blayne would laugh if something like that happened. I shudder just thinking about it.

"It's not that far, don't worry," Blayne reassures me, and I nod. Somehow I get the feeling that this isn't the place or time for loud voices and teasing remarks, unlike our usual conversations. It's dark under the canopy of trees, not to mention creepy and silent. I follow Blayne without question, watching my feet carefully so as to avoid tripping up on the hazardous terrain. \_What could be so interesting, out here, in the middle of a forest that Blayne found the need to bring me here? \_We walk in silence for a few more minutes, getting deeper and deeper into the heart of the forest. "You know, I'm sorry to ask and allâ€¦" I trail off, "But what the hell are we doing in the middle of a forest? I'm seriously considering you murdering me as an option, you know."

Blayne laughs, "What is it? You don't like surprises or something?"

I stare at him blankly. "Does anyone like surprises? I'm an impatient person, so\_no; \_I'm definitely not a fan."

"You take the fun out of it," He grins, holding a branch back to let me pass. I stick my tongue out in reply. \_Because I'm so mature like that. \_Yeah, be jealous.

After what seems like forever, the trees begin to dwindle and a small clearing comes into view. I don't really know what I was expecting, but it wasn't here. I frown a little at the dewy grass, preparing to sit down on my hoodie, but to my surprise Blayke keeps walking. He crosses through the clearing and back into the forestry of the other side. \_Are you kidding me? \_I sigh a little, frustrated that my discovery was incorrect, before stumbling after him into the forest again.

Unlike the other side of the clearing however, this side is a hill. Blayke easily treads down the steep terrain as though he's been here a million times, but it takes a few stumbles for my feet to grow used to the steep decline. We walk to the bottom of the hill, and every now and then Blayke will have to hold back some branches or stop me from stumbling. He smiles, but he doesn't talk much. Somehow it doesn't feel like the right time too. Once we reach the end of the hill however, another clearing emerges, but this one is so different from the first. \_It's amazing.\_

The clearing is much larger than the first, quite far back on top of a cliff. I can just about see the coastline in the distance, and hear the rumble of the sea, but that's not the focus of my awe. \_No, the focus is just so much better. \_Just in front of us lies an abandoned railway: a gorgeous stone bridge smothered in ivy to the far left (at the edge of the clearing) with a rusted track leading straight through the middle. It's beautiful, and old, and the kind of thing you see on the front of stunning scenery magazines. Untouched and just amazing. My mouth pops open in reaction to the view, and Blayke turns to look at me with a just as breath taking goofy grin. "You like it?" He grabs my hand and pulls me down the hill towards the tracks, and we stop just a few metres in front of it. \_Oh my god, he's holding my hand.\_

"I love it," I whisper as we sit down, staring at the gorgeous stone bridge. "Who introduced you to this place?" Sadly, he lets go of my hand at this point, but the skin still feels warm and tingly.

"We lived here for a couple of years when I was little. That's how I know Luigi, Toad and Waluigi by the way," He shoots me a sideways glance, "We used to come here a lot- it was our hang out spot, but when shit happened I had to move away. I've been coming here recently- it's kind of where I like to think, y'know? You're the first person other than the guys who I have brought up here though."

"I feel honoured," I tease, elbowing him a little in the ribs. He grins back at me.

"So are you going to tell me what was wrong now? I brought you here, to my thinking space," Blayke gestures at the scenery, "So it's time to tell me why you were crying. It's only obligatory."

I bite my lip. \_I should tell him, but it's difficult. It's not like I broadcast this often.\_ Seeing my conflicted expression, Blayke brushes his shoulder against mine and smiles. "I'm waiting." His voice is teasing, but at the same time there's an undertone of

curiosity. \_He really does care. You should tell him. It's not like it's a secret or anything anyway.\_

"It's not that big of a deal," I warn him. "Seriously, you'll probably think I'm being melodramatic or something."

"Just spit it out Rosalina." He leans back to rest on his elbows, staring out at the railway line. \_My god, he's good looking. Why is he so gorgeous? It shouldn't be allowed. I look like a fugly hobbit in comparison.\_

\_ "When I was thirteen, a boy moved to town." I begin. My voice is slightly shaky with nerves, but other than that I feel fine. I trust him. Just about. "His name was Marth, and he was my first real crush." I glance down at the grass, blushing a little. "He was in most of my classes, and he was really sweet to me. It was only natural that we became friends. Our mum's became close, and one thing led to another and finally one day, Marth asked me to be his girlfriend. And I said yes." The last word comes out as a sigh.

"I guess you could say we were childhood sweethearts in a sense. We were closer than close. I loved it: he was my best friend, and I thought we were going to marry when we were older: we were the perfect match. Our parents adored our relationship too," The tender smile drops from my face as I struggle to curve my lips around the next words. "Around a year ago however, something big happened. It was hard for me, harder than I could ever describe, but I wasn't the only one affected by it- Marth was too. A few months passed and we were both in bad places. Marth decided to use this bad place against me and he had sex with another girl. The girl got pregnant, had an abortion, and he moved away to the Sarasaland about 6 months ago. She was \_sixteen.\_"

"Waitâ€¦what big thing happened to cause all of that?"

I shoot him a warning look, and he successfully shuts up, although I can feel his curiosity bubbling beneath his sealed lips. \_I'm not ready to tell him that part.\_

I take a deep breath and continue, hoping to distract him. "I went on a blind date tonightâ€¦Danielle planned for me to meet at the Elephant Bar with a friend of a friend. He was new to town, wanted some company, and I figured \_what the hell\_. I turned up, however, and it was him. Marth Charlton. He's moved back here, and he wants another chanceâ€¦" I trail off, picking at a piece of grass. "And he means it, that's the scary part. He's joined our school again and everything." I chuckle bitterly, "I'm scared. I don't want to forgive him, but I have the feeling that I'm going to fall weak at the knees."

Blayke looks at me for a little while, and the silence envelopes us. It's like he's trying to absorb the information, get a better grip on what I've just told him.

"I won't let you," Blayke says finally, "He's a bastard, and he doesn't deserve another shot, Rosie. Don't stoop down to his level." Blayke's face grows hard with determination, and suddenly he's speaking a little more quickly and surely. "We'll have to make sure you avoid him at all costs. Keep you out of his sight, and maybe he'll drop it. I don't really know much about these things, but I

won't let him hurt you. None of the guys will. We'll keep an eye on him."

"Thanks," I smile without meeting Blayke's eyes, turning away from him to stare at the scenery. I don't want him to see the guilt and hurt in my eyes. \_He thinks I've told him everything. If only he knew half of the story.\_

"You're welcome," Blayke replies, he sighs a little, his eyes trailing over the scenery. "I much prefer this place to Arizona y'know. Memories and stuff I guess. This place is just so much nicer than my last house."

"Whereabouts did you live before you moved back here then?"

"In the middle of nowhere," Blayke smiles, as if that's all the answer I need. "What time is it?"

>I check my watch, "It's about eight thirty."<br>"We best get you home. Wouldn't want your mom to sniff us out, huh?" Blayke stands up, brushing the dust from his jeans, and offering me a hand up. \_Wow, Blayke Moonlight is acting like a gentleman.\_ I gratefully take the hand, only for it to be pulled away quickly, meaning I fall back on my butt painfully. I probably should have expected that. Blayke keels over, laughing at me, to which I scowl.

"Dork."

But he just keeps on laughing. Stupid jerkface.

\*~\*~\*

>"You know, I don't get why girls like this film so much," Blayke comments, staring at the credits of <em>The Notebook</em> with a disapproving expression. " \*\*SPOILER ALERT SPOILER ALERT\*\* I mean, they both \_die!\_ How is that fun to watch in the slightest? Why would girls want to cry? \_\*\*SPOLER ALERT FINISHED\*\*\_\*\*\*\* He reaches into the bag of popcorn, pouting when he realises that it's empty. At the moment, we're in my room watching the notebook on my little TV. I started watching it as soon as I got home, but Blayke got interested too, seeing me through the window, and so clambered into my room over the gap. Needless to say, I called him a stalker and threw popcorn at his face.

"I guess it's for the same reason that a lot of people like horror movies," I shrug. "You don't necessarily want to be scared senseless; you just watch it because you want to. Girls like The Notebook because it's romantic." I sit up straighter, brushing popcorn debris from my lap. "Plus Ryan Gosling is quite literally one of the hottest men alive. That too."

"Hotter than me?" Blayke wriggles his eyebrows, making kissy faces at me.

\_No.\_

"Are you kidding me?" I laugh, "No competition. He's the clear winner."

"Do you expect me to believe that for a second princess?" Blayke gestures down at himself, "Don't deny that you want yourself a slice of this pie."

"I prefer Apple, thanks."

"Again with the denial. Tut tut. Hasn't anyone ever told you that it's naughty to lie, Rosalina?"

"Hasn't anyone told you that modesty is an admirable trait, Blayke?" I mock him in a funny voice.

"How can you be modest, \_and \_look like this? Physical impossibility princess."

"I'll show you a physical impossibility." I mutter under my breath, scowling.

Blayke stares at me for a long time before finally saying, "I think you want to bang me."

\_I do.\_

Wait, what?!

\* \* \*

><p><em><strong>Author Note: Yeah I know, I know. This chapter is pretty crap...sorry if I disappointed anyone<strong> :/\_

## 12. Do you Wanna to make Purple?

\_\*\*Ch 12: Do you Want to make purple?\*\*\_

"27â€|28â€|29â€|30! Ready or not, here I come!" Blayke's voice ricochets faintly around the house, causing Millie to squirm in anticipation from on my lap. Yep, we're playing hide and seek. Call us kids, but it's a fun game: not to mention Eulyric's favourite. Blayke is upstairs in Eulyric's room right now; at least that was where he was counting. As for me and Eulyric, well we're hidden in the crammed storage cupboard under the stairs. I swear the amount of shoes and sharp things I'm sat on now should be enough to take me into hospital. Uncomfortable is an understatement for this freaking cupboard.

Above us, Blayke's footsteps are enough to make Eulyric fidget nervously again as he treks down the stairs. \_What is he, an elephant?\_ "Jeez man, lose some weight if your footsteps sound like that," I mutter under my breath. Eulyric giggles quietly, curling further up into my lap. Its pitch black in this darned cupboard, but even so I can tell that Eulyric's eyes are sparkling with excitement. She adores her big brother, and recently I think she's been truly warming up to me as well. When I arrived a couple of hours ago, Eulyric crashed straight into my legs, hugging them. Plus, she's getting less of her withdrawal symptoms now, and Autumn has left us with her for the entire day because she's meeting up with her boyfriend who's been away. I don't mind, if I'm honest. The kid is growing on me, plus Blayke's not too bad- minus the cocky remarks and teasing of course.

Blayke's footsteps pass by the cupboard towards the lounge, and I hold my breath in anticipation. Part of me is wishing that Blayke

would hurry up and find us so that I can finally get out of this horrible torture chamber (I think I'm sat on a Lego brick- the worst kind of pain) , but then the other part is giggling in excitement, similar to what Eulyric's doing now. "Shhh," I smile, putting my finger to her lips. She giggles again, more quietly this time, but it's possible that Alec heard it.

Sure enough, we don't have to wait long until the footsteps head back towards us, and Eulyric tenses in my arms, releasing a high pitched quiet squeal and shielding her eyes. "I wonder where they could beâ€¦" Blayke ponders loudly outside, obviously for Millie's sake. I roll my eyes in amusement but Eulyric gasps, squirming to get as far away from the cupboard door as possible. "Is that a giggle?" Blayke's footsteps get closer and closer, until I can hear him stood right outside of the door. Even I'm squirming at this point. "Is it coming from in there?" He muses, "No, can't be. They're much too big to fit in that tiny cupboard."

"Well excuse me," I say sarcastically as I hear him walking away, and Millie screams as his footsteps stop walking away, knowing that he'll find us. He obviously heard meâ€¦to be honest; I think the whole street did. I said it purposefully loud. A smirk curves my lips as Blayke swings open the door dramatically, his eyes searching for Eulyric.

"Gotcha," He whispers and grabs Eulyric by the waist. She screams loudly as he brings her up effortlessly to his chest, before blowing a raspberry on her bare stomach where her top has risen. She's giggling and squirming as he tickles her, laughing. I watch on, feeling like a creep for watching such an intimate sibling moment, but it's just too cute not to look on. Heck, you don't see this part of Blayke everyday- I need to make the most of it.

I think I need to move now. That Lego brick is imprinting itself into my ass.

I shift and stand up in the cupboard, straightening out my beanie and brushing off my jeans. Now anyone who knows me well knows that I'm most certainly not a fashionista, but I'm pretty proud of the outfit I co-ordinated today. A pair of pale blue skinny jeans, a nautical navy and white striped top and a navy beanie with my converse: the kind of outfits that Danielle wished I wore all of the time, but one I actually don't mind wearing. Ooh speaking of Danielle, I told her about what happened on the blind date, and she apologised profusely. She, like Blayke, knows the basics of mine and Marth's past relationship, but there are some things I can't tell even my best friend. I haven't told anyone, for my own reasons. It gets lonely sometimes.

Seeing me straightening up, Blayke sets Eulyric back on her feet, a small smirk on his face. "So squirt, what do you want to do now? What about the park?"

Eulyric's eyes light up at the word and she nods excitedly. "I want to go to the park! Please can we go to the park and get ice creams Blayke?" Blayke looks up at me for confirmation first, checking to see if I'm okay with it. Why wouldn't I be? I grin and put my hands up in surrender.

"It's okay with me."



"Then let's go," Blayke bends down and smiles at Eulyric, "Go get your coat and converse on and wait by the door, kay squirt? Maybe I'll buy ice cream if you're quick." Eulyric beams excitedly, before darting off upstairs to grab a jacket. Blayke straightens, glancing over at me with a small half smile. "Beanies suit you." And with that, he jogs to go and grab something from the kitchen, leaving me paralysed in the hallway. Did Blayke just compliment me? Aw damn, where's a voice recorder when you need one?

After a second, Blayke returns, sliding some loose change into his pocket. He's holding a packet of skittles in his hand, and when he catches me staring at them he wriggles his eyebrows. "Wanna taste the rainbow, Rosalina?" \_Well, if you insistâ€¦|\_

Joking, guys. Seriously, joking. I just want the skittles. "I'd rather not thanks," I wink at Blayke.

"Lying to yourself again, huh Rosalina? You ready to leave?" He asks me, and I nod, deciding not to comment on the compliment he gave to me. Eulyric clomps down the stairs wearing an adorable denim jacket with some tiny pink converse. A wide eyed (and rather creepy) baby doll is cradled in her arms. "Is Daisy coming too?" Blayke asks Eulyric. He says it in a reluctant way, so I'm assuming that the creepy doll's name is Daisy.

Eulyric nods, "Of course Blayke. What kind of a mummy would I be if I left her here?" She says it so seriously that I crack up laughing, which earns me a small scowl from Blayke. Ah bless, Eulyric is too damn cute for her own good. She watches me laughing for a little while, before she begins to giggle along with me. It's obvious she has no idea what we're laughing about: she's following my example, but it annoys Blayke all the same. He glares over at me, pulling a dark varsity jacket over his shirt and chinos. A pair of black converse shield his feet, similar to my own white pair. Even Eulyric is wearing some.

"Look, "I walk over to him, pointing at our feet and Eulyric's, "We match!"

"You're so weird," He chuckles, "But yes, we do match. Shall we go now?" I nod my head in affirmation and he opens the front door for us to leave. Eulyric is first out; obviously, with her baby Daisy staring freakily ahead with glassy blue eyes. The park isn't too far from our houses, literally a few streets away so we decide to walk. We could take my car, but the struggle for Eulyric's booster seat would just be an unnecessary pain in the ass. I linger a little bit in the front yard and grab Eulyric's free hand, waiting for Blayke to lock the front door. Once he's done, we all turn right on the sidewalk and head down the street towards the park. Blayke opens the packet, offering me some of the skittles.

I take the blue one and pop it in my mouth, grinning.

"The blue one? What are you, a smurf? Everyone knows red is the best." Blayke says to me, shoving a handful into his mouth. I scowl at him distastefully. Everyone loves the red ones, but the blue ones dye your tongue and how much more fun is THAT? I mean, c'mon, who doesn't want a smurf tongue? "I beg to differ," I chime, shoving a few more blue skittles into my mouth. "Blue is just so much

cooler."

"I've got red, you've got blue! Wanna make purple?" Blayke winks, leaning in to make kissy noises in my ear. I squeal a little bit and shift away, throwing a skittle at him in defence. \_I have incredibly sensitive ears. It's my weak spot. \_I watch sadly, as the poor defenceless green skittle hits him on the nose, before falling to the floor with a clatter.

"You're a waste of skittles," I huff, "Stop hitting on me, dude."

"Hitting on you?" Blayke raises an eyebrow, "I don't need to hit on girls to make them fall at my feet."

"Cocky bastard," I mutter.

"I'm sorry, what was that Rosalina?" Blayke teases, "Something about my cock? Don't worry girl. I can assure you that it's nice and b-"

"I don't want to know!" I yelp, shoving the packet of skittles in front of his mouth to block what he was going to say. \_I'm an innocent child. Still very innocent, sue me.\_ Blayke laughs from behind the skittles packet, and I scowl at him, covering Eulyric's ears. "There are two pairs of very innocent ears walking besides you," I warn him, "Be aware of that, okay?" He winks in reply.

"So do you come to the park often?" I ask him awkwardly, attempting to change the subject.

Blayke snorts a little at my obvious gesture, "Well I've only been living here a few weeks Rosalina."

"Oh shut up, you know what I meant." I stick my tongue out at him, showing off my blue smurfiness. \_Suck on that, red boy. Bet your tongue doesn't look that cool.\_

"I used to take Eulyric to the park every week to get ice cream, back in our old house. Guess the tradition continued." Blayke shrugs, shoving another skittle into his mouth. Eulyric still skips ahead, talking quietly to her dolly as she does. \_I think she's singing to it.\_

"Isn't that the sweetest?" I tease. "Every weekend? What an adorable big bro you are."

"Ugh, don't call me that," Blayke groans beside me, "Makes me sound like a pussy."

I grin mischievously. "You look like one too."

Blayke stares at me. "I think you'd better start running."

I grin and jog to catch up with Eulyric. "Quick!" I tell her, "Blayke is the mean monster and he's trying to catch us! We need to run away!" Millie gasps at the news, abandoning her singing and grabbing my hand. Together we run (well, jogging for me, running for Eulyric) down the sidewalk as fast as we can. Blayke is making monster noises behind us, playing along, and Eulyric squeals as she hears him

getting closer. After a second of running however, Eulyric is yanked away from me and 'eaten' by Blayke. I can hear her giggling loudly as Blayke tickles her.

"Run Rosalina!" She screams, and this time I really do run. It doesn't take long for Blayke's to catch me though. He grabs me by the waist, hitting my ticklish spot and pretends to take a bite out of my shoulder.

"Delicious," He grins, and I swat him on the chest.

"Hey Eulyric, you want a piggyback?" Blayke asks Eulyric, who's attached herself back to me again.

Eulyric's head snaps up at Blayke's voice and she nods eagerly, letting go of my hand as he crouches down into position. I can't help but be a little bit disappointed at our loss of contact, but the adorable sight makes up for it. She clambers onto his back, wrapping her legs and arms around him like a little monkey, her dolly hanging from her hands. \_Now that's cuteness.\_ Blayke straightens up, not even showing the tiniest hint of effort, and I roll my eyes. \_Macho show-off.\_ "Want to race?" Blayke wriggles his eyebrows at me, "I bet I can still beat you, even with Eulyric on my back."

"You're on," I grin, feeling incredibly confident. Fat chance that he'll be able to beat me with her on his back, \_especially\_ if she drops her dolly. No doubt if she does, she'll want Blayke to stop and pick it up. He hasn't got a chance in hell. Plus I used to be on the track team. Enough said, methinks. I have a right to be confident. "First one to the park gates wins."

Blayke smirks back at me. "Threeâ€|twoâ€|oneâ€|Go!"

We bolt down the road, sprinting hard down the flat tarmac. No doubt there are people watching us, thinking we're crazy, but I don't give a sugar really. Through the wind on my face, I can feel my eyes stinging and watering, but it's kind of a nice feeling. I've always liked running, although I'm more of a sprint girl than I am long distance. Eulyric's cheers and screams from Blayke's back are both funny and exciting, egging me on further. I'm no more than twenty metres from the gates now, and already Blayke is falling back. \_And here he thought he was going to win.\_ I used to be on the track team, and I'm incredibly competitive. Put them together: we both know you haven't got a chance.

Just saying.

I reach the gates with a whoop of victory, turning just in time to see Blayke arrive too. Eulyric slides off his back as he kneels down, and he's panting just a little, glaring at my feet so as to refuse looking me in the eye. "What was that bet again Moonlight?" I tease, hopping around happily. Eulyric joins in, giggling with exhilaration. Her little cheeks are flushed red with excitement, her hair fluffy and ruffled by the wind. I offer her a high five, and she slaps it enthusiastically.

"Shut up Star," Blayke grumbles, grabbing Eulyric's hand to lead her into the park. In all honesty, he did do really well, considering he had a 4 year old on his back. Unfortunately his strength was just not enough for my ninja speed. Besides, a small kick in his ego wouldn't

hurt him. It might mean that his balloon sized head shrinks a little and that can't be a bad thing. As Eulyric spots the swings and slides, she lets out an excited gasp, bolting towards them as fast as she can. Grumpy pants still won't look me in the eye. What is it with men and their pride, eh? He's pouting like a little kid.

"Oh don't be such a sore loser," I tease Blayke as we slide onto a bench at the edge of the playground. From here we have a perfect view of Eulyric, and by the looks of it she's already making friends, chatting happily to another girl her age on the climbing frame. I wish it was that easy for teenagers, sometimes. "She's really not shy is she?" Blayke chuckles under his breath. I shake my head in reply, smiling. Gosh, we're acting like her parents.

My gaze is soon caught by the skateboarders though, the ramps to my left. There are a few boys around our age rolling expertly down the ramps, and I can't help but long to be over there too. \_Not to mention how some of them are pretty good looking.\_ I'm actually semi-decent at skateboarding, but I haven't done it in a while. I sigh, turning back to glance over at Eulyric and check that she's okay.

"What's up?" Blayke asks me curiously, glancing over at the skateboarders to see what I was looking at. One of the boys glances over at us, showing a spark of interest. He nods mutely to Blayke, a sign of respect, and Blayke returns it. \_Typical awkward guys.\_ I fight the urge to roll my eyes. After a second of staring however, the boy motions to his couple of mates and they begin to head over. My stomach shifts nervously, but I can't help but be a little bit excited that I'm going to be surrounded by hot guys. \_Not like it's every day is it?\_

"Alright mate?" The boy grins at Blayke. He's quite good looking-with dark curly hair and a lip piercing. Not really my type (more Danielle's), but I'd imagine that anybody would find him attractive-he's definitely cute. The others are also good looking from the looks of it, but they're busy rolling around on their skateboards for me to pay much attention to facial features, so I just pay attention to him instead. His eyes twinkle green as he notices me, and he swiftly throws me a wink that makes me blush and look down at my lap. \_Well this is awkward.\_

"Yeah I'm good cheers," Blayke replies coolly, but he stiffens beside me as he sees the wink. Then, ever so casually, he throws his arm around the back of the bench. \_Whatâ€¦?\_ I stare at him surprised. What is he trying to do? The boy in front of us watches the action cheekily, and I start to feel a little unsettled. \_What is this, like a possessive thing? Territory marking?\_ I glance over at Eulyric. I'm glad she's okay playing with the other girl. They seem to be getting on well, at least. Maybe I'll escape over there.

"I'm Tanooki," The boy grins. "You any good at boarding? Want a go?"

"Blayke. And no thanks, it's not really my thing." Blayke's voice sounds slightly defensive and cold, and I look over at him surprised. Why is he being so rude? Tanooki's eyebrows rise a little at his reaction, before he turns to me with the twinkle returned to his eyes. \_What a flirt.\_

"What about you, babe? Want a go?"

I glance over to Blayke, before shrugging. "Yeah, I think I will."

Tanooki grins, offering me a hand to pull me up. "That's cool," He smirks, "Yo mate, I think you're little girlfriend here has bigger balls than you." He kicks up his skateboard and offers it to me, smiling smugly over at Blayke when he thinks I'm not looking. As for Blayke, I don't think he's even noticed me leaving; he's too busy glaring at Tanooki. \_Boys and their stupid pride. \_I grab the skateboard and begin to walk towards the ramps. I climb up a medium sized one in the most dignified way I can, setting the board on the edge and placing my foot on it to steady it. I can sense them all watching me, and I blush. No pressure then.

I place my weight on the board, and slide down the ramp towards the jumps. I'm no expert here, but I can do the odd trick or two. Marth showed me some back when we were together: we came here a lot to practice. The wind rushes in my face, and I feel the familiar drop of adrenaline as I jump down the ramp. Boom! The skateboard spins beneath my feet in an Olly trick that I've practiced many times (usually in my back yard because I'm sad like that), and then I continue to slide up the nearest jump. My skateboard flicks high in the air at the end, and I catch it, landing firmly on my feet on the ground. Bam. I've still got it, baby.

I'm feeling smug.

I turn towards the boys and offer them a small courtesy. Tanooki is full on grinning, but Blayke just looks shocked. Is it really that surprising that I know how to skateboard? Sexist pigs these days.

I chuck Tanooki his skateboard back, and he catches it neatly. "Thanks," I smile, "I needed that."

"You're welcome," Tanooki steps closer. A little too close for my liking, despite how hot he is. The player vibe is practically flooding off him. "Maybe I could get your number in return?" I go to reply but Blayke beats me to it, interrupting.

"I think we should go now Rosalina. Nice meeting you Tanooki," Blayke grabs my arm, sneering Tanooki's name as though it's a disease. I cock an eyebrow at him as he drags me away from the guys. I can hear them laughing behind us. Is there something I'm missing? I glance over at Blayke, but he's just glaring forward. \_Someone's PMSing.\_ I stare confused at Blayke as he pulls me onto a bench, as far away as I can possibly get from the skateboarders. From here we can still see Eulyric, but not as well. I don't understand- why can't we just go and sit where we were sat? He slides in next to me, still frowning from the incident. Anger washes off him in thick rich waves, and his eyes are stormy as he avoids my gaze.

"Okay, what's up? Because you're acting like a pre-teen on her first period."

Nothing.

"Blaykeâ€¦" I say in a singsong voice, "PMSing princess, it's time to stop ignoring Rosalina."

"You should be thanking me," He grunts, "I saved you from that pig." His arms are crossed. The resemblance between him and a spoilt pouty kid right now is astonishing. He is acting like a fat kid whose been banned from chocolate. \_(And trust me, I know that face very well, having pulled it a few times before).\_

"Saved me?" I cock an eyebrow. "Oh, noble Blayke, however can I repay you for stealing me away from the cute skateboarding guy \_who wanted my number." \_I made sure to put extra emphasis on the last four words. It's not every day that cute guys want your number!

"Drama queen. He wasn't good looking, and he was a pig. You don't need him."

\_Well I beg to differ, personally.\_

"Besides, when you were going down the ramps, all he was talking about was your ass."

"And who can blame him?" I joke, winking at Blayke. He just shoots me a blank stare in reply, and I roll my eyes. "Okay seriously Blayke? I was kidding. Kid. ding. You are such a grumpy guts right now, I can't even describe. Whatever, I'm going to go and see Eulyric." I straighten up from my crouch and head over to the swings and slides, where Eulyric is playing with her newfound friend. Both of the girls looks up at me when I come up, and Eulyric offers me a big grin.

"This is Rosie," She tells her friend, dragging out my name happily; "She's my babysitter. Blayke, my big bro, is her prince charming. Aren't you Blayke?"

I spin around. I hadn't realised that Blayke was behind me. He ignores my blushing face, cocking an eyebrow at Eulyric instead. "Prince charming? Oh I don't know about that. Rosalina isn't the princess type. She's more like a toad or a-"

"A female knight," I finish for him, shooting him a glare. "I think you'll find that Blayke is the swamp monster, definitely not prince charming. Gosh no."

"Swamp monster?" Blayke turns to me, an amused smirk curving his lips, "I should be horrified that you think of me like that kitty." \_Whoa, Bipolar much? What happened to the grumpy dwarf I left behind?\_

\_Oh my gosh. Imagine Blayke as a dwarf.\_

"Definitely."

"So I have something to ask you."

My heart thuds in my chest. "What?"

No, no, no. He's not going to ask you out. Shut up Rosalina. Seriously, shut it.

"Would you like to accompany Waluigi, Luigi and Toad and I to the beach on Saturday?"

\_Not like I was expecting anything else, was it?\_

\_Stupid swamp monster.\_

### 13. Cootie

\_\*\*Ch 13: Cootie\*\*\_

"Ac-hoo!" I sneeze explosively, rocking back and forth in my bed. My duvet is coiled around me like a cocoon and my body feels sticky with sweat from my fever. \_Gross, I know. \_I squint at the alarm clock with sore eyes, the light only intensifying my head ache that much more. \_7:15 Am. This time should be illegal. \_I groan quietly and collapse back to the pillow, exhausted. Yeah, there's no doubt that I'm sick. Unfortunately, knowing my darling mother, unless I'm practically dying- I'll still be going in to school. \_The disadvantages of having a doctor as a mother I guess: they know when you can cope with going to school, whether you feel able to or not.\_

I sit up slowly and slide my feet out of bed, resting my back against the headboard. I probably need to go and have a shower ready for school, but I'm going to try and persuade mom into letting me stay home first. "Mom!" I call weakly, "Mom, please can you come here?" I can hear her shuffling about in the room opposite, and after an exasperated sigh she appears in the doorway.

"What is it Rosalina? You know I need to get ready for work," She leans her head against the doorway, the bags prominent beneath her eyes despite how much sleep she gets. I know my mum has a stressful job, so I try not to cause her anymore stress, but today I really don't think I can go to school, and I'm being honest. I'm having one of those horrible head-pounding days that everybody dreads

.

"Mom, I feel terrible," I tell her, my voice raspy from my sore throat, "I've got a killer headache and a fever. I honestly don't think I can go in." The brute honesty in my voice must have registered with her, and she quickly surveys my condition; her eyes running over my rumpled sheets and pasty skin. Sighing, she heads over to the bed to put her hand on my forehead. It's like ice against my clammy skin, and from the concerned but frustrated look she gives me, she knows it too. "You have a fever," She murmurs, "I suppose you can stay off school today, but you've got to promise to look after yourself Rosalina," She gives me a warning look, "I have non-stop appointments today and I can't afford for you to keep ringing me whilst I'm at work. Take some aspirin, okay?"

"Okay mum. Love you," I smile weakly. She returns the smile, pecking me on the forehead sweetly.

"Oh, and have a shower," She calls back to me as she leaves the room, "You stink."

\_Gee, thanks mom.\_

Obedying mom's orders, I haul myself out of bed and weakly plod into

the bathroom, not even bothering to check in the mirror first. \_I know I'll look disgusting, what's the point in confirming it?\_ I'm ill, I deserve to look like a hobo for at least one day. Turning on the water with a small sigh, I strip down from my sweat ridden clothes and step into the shower. \_My lord, I needed this. \_The hot jets of water wash away the grime and sweat that has gathered overnight, leaving me feeling a lot less grungy, and a hell of a lot more refreshed.

\_Grungy is such a disgusting word.\_

After towel drying my hair, I pull it up in a messy bun and shove on an old band t-shirt with my superman leggings. Yes, you heard that right by the way. Superman leggings. Be jealous. \_I'm not going to dress up for a day full of sneezing, am I? \_Not bothering to do make-up, I head back into my bedroom and draw back the curtains to speak to Blayne. This is becoming a kind of regular occurrence now- we speak through our windows a lot. It's like a big, juicy cliché, I know. \_Don't remind me\_. Blayne glances over as I open the window, offering me a small smile. He's stood there, smiling at me, absolutely jaw droppingly shirtless.

\_Oh sweet baby Jesus. I don't think my ovaries can take much more of this.\_

"You look like crap," Blayne comments bluntly, pulling a shirt over his head as he heads towards the window. Shame, really. I wouldn't have minded staring at him for just a little bit longer. \_Whoa, when did I turn into such a creeper?\_

"Oh cheers Blayne!" I drawl in a raspy voice, "You sure do know how to lighten up a girl's day. I'm ill, dumbass."

Blayne stares at me dubiously, his eyes running up and down in a disapproving manner as he wrinkles his nose. \_I want to punch him. I honestly want to punch him.\_

"You're ill," Blayne frowns, "Does that mean you're staying off school?"

"Congrats Einstein."

Blayne ignores my sarcasm; instead a slow grin crosses his features. "I'm going to stay off with you." I choke on my saliva. \_What?! \_"You could do with someone to take care of you. I can't be arsed to go to school. It's perfect," he continues, smirking at my horrified expression. \_Did he seriously just say what I thought he said? No, he can't stay off with me! I don't want him to!\_

"Not happening," I shake my head, "I'm going to lie in bed all day eating soup, and taking aspirin. \_You\_ are going to school. I can't let you bunk off- my mom would kill me. \_Your\_ mom would kill me."

"Oh c'mon Rosalina, as if I'm going to listen to you anyway. Look, whether I'm hanging out with you or not, I'm skiving today. You might as well have a person to look after you." Blayne smirks, damn bastard. He already knows he's won. I can feel my resolve crumbling beneath me as I glare at him. \_It would be better to have some company. He's going to skive anyway, whatever I tell him- might as



well make the most of it. Maybe he could make me soup? Do you think he's got anymore skittles?\_

"Whatever," I grumble, retreating from the window. "Come at any time after 9:00. I don't want mom to be here and see you skiving." I can practically feel Blayke's smug grin burning holes into my back, but I shrug it off as I head downstairs to get some aspirin and mocha. The aspirin will hopefully get rid of my throbbing headache and the mochaâ€|well that's for my sanity. I'm going to need it if I'm hanging out with Blayke all day. "Hey Mario," I murmur as I see my brother eating his cereal at the breakfast bar. "What's up, bro?" My voice is still raspy from my poor throat. We might have some throat lozenges in the kitchen somewhere. I'll have to dig those up.

"Playing Mine craft," Mario replies as he concentrates heavily on the iPad in front of him, tapping the screen furiously. "I need to kill these zombies mega-quick." He gives a small grunt of effort as he focuses on the game, the abandoned bowl of cereal left to become soggy on the table next to him.

"C'mon zombie slayer," I ruffle his hair, "Eat your breakfast. Mom's got a big day today- you need to be ready for school in five minutes."

"Why haven't you left yet Rosie?" He asks me, not moving his eyes from the game.

"I'm feeling really ill so I'm not going in to school today," I explain, heading over to the cupboard to grab some aspirin. Mario's head finally snaps up at that, and he ignores the zombies on his screen to concentrate on me. I shake my head with a smile, knowing what's coming next. I take a glass of water and gulp down a couple of aspirin as Mario groans behind me.

"Aww that's not fair," He whines, "I want to stay at home! Why is mum making me go?"

"Because you aren't ill," I roll my eyes, ignoring the pain in my head as I do so. "Eat your breakfast."

"This is so unfair," He grumbles, stirring his cereal. He's acting like a typical eight year old boy. Does he think I want to feel like crap? I roll my eyes and begin searching around the cupboards for some throat lozenges. I rarely get ill, luckily for me, so I don't even know for sure that we have some. I'm just living off the hope that we do, because my throat is on fire.

"Got ya," I murmur as I finally uncover some in the midst of the cereal boxes. \_Why they're there, I'll never know. \_The packet looks about five years out of date, and the sweets are all stuck to their wrappers, but it can't do that much harm can it? I might as well give it a shot. "I'm going upstairs to bed," I decide, shoving a menthol lozenge in my mouth, "Have a good day at school." He doesn't grace me with a reply, too busy slaying zombies no doubt. \_Kids.\_

I collapse back into my bedcovers with a sigh, wrapping the roasting fabric around me despite my skyrocketing temperature. I am craving mocha, but it's only because I'm really tired. Might as well get some sleep until Blayke arrives and then have one when I wake upâ€|I have

the feeling I'm going to need all the energy I can get today. Another head throb hits me hard and I cringe into the pillow.

\_I bloody hope that aspirin kicks in soon.\_

"Rosalina," Someone's voice stirs me from my sleep and I shift uncomfortably. "Rosalina, c'mon, wake-up." \_Why won't they just leave me to sleep?\_ I grumble under my breath, keeping my eyelids firmly closed as I snuggle deeper into my cocoon of blankets. \_Justâ€¦leaveâ€¦meâ€¦toâ€¦sleep.\_ "Rosalina!" The voice persists mercilessly. My eyes snap open and I growl in frustration, knowing that there's no chance that I'll get back to sleep. Who is this person, and why are they waking me up?

"What?" I snap, "What do you want?" I sit up in my bed, scowling as the cloudy headedness hits me again and searching for the culprit, only to find that my bedroom is empty. My irritated expression morphs into a frown as I realise the sound isn't coming from inside the room, it's coming from outside. More specifically, the window.

\_Blayke freaking Moonlight, I am going to castrate you. Preferably with a really rusted, blunt knife.\_

"What is it Blayke?" I grumble, climbing out of bed to head to the window. I quickly run my fingers through the messy loose curls that have escaped from my bun, tucking them behind my ear. \_So I'm self-conscious about my bedhead, don't judge me. I can't help it that I happen to live next door to a Spanish hottie who falls out of bed looking like a supermodel. I'm pretty sure you'd do the same in my position.\_ "Why in the hell did you wake me up?" I step in front of the window, leaning down ever so slightly to glare at the boy in the opposite sill.

"It's 11:00am princess. Who lit the fuse to your tampon?"

My eyes narrow. \_Damn it, my comeback abilities don't work at this time of morning.\_ "Leave me alone Moonlight, I want to go back to sleep."

"But what about our fun day together, kitty? Aren't you looking forward to that? I assure you it will be much more fun than sleeping," Blayke winks at me. \_Why do I have the feeling he's making some kind of sexual innuendo?\_ \_Probably because he is.

"I don't know what your problem is but I bet it's hard to pronounce," I mutter under my breath, before turning to Blayke with a huff. \_It's not like I'm going to get anymore sleep anyway.\_ "Fine," I announce, "You can come over, but I'm warning you I feel like crap- so this day is going to be anything but productive." \_I didn't mean for it to come out like thatâ€¦oh gosh, I just fed Blayke's perverted mind even more.\_

"You just crushed my hopes and dreams kitty. I thought we'd get a lot done today," Blayke wriggles his eyebrows. \_Yup, definitely making sexual innuendos.\_ \_Creep. I say nothing in reply, just stick out my tongue and slam the window. \_The epitome of maturity right here. \_Without looking back, I know that he's smirking victoriously: I can practically feel the pride radiating off him. Smug grasshole. I roll my eyes and head over to the bathroom to brush my teeth again. I

don't want Blayke to know that I practically have a moss mouth.

\_Why do I care what Blayke thinks?\_ Good question, inner self.

After brushing my teeth, I head downstairs to the kitchen, rubbing my temples and sucking on another throat lozenge. \_I hate being ill. \_Heck, I'd rather be in school than sat at home all day feeling like this, and that's saying something considering today's lessons were meant to be Maths, Geography and Chemistry, amongst a few others. I stick the kettle on for my mocha, rubbing the skin under my eyes as though I can make the huge bags there disappear. I hardly got any sleep last night because of that stupid headache that's been killing me all morning. The aspirin has taken the edge off of it, but it's still prominently there.

Just as I'm pouring the water into my favourite mug, the doorbell rings. \_He's here.\_ What he thinks we're going to be doing all day is a mystery to me, because I don't really feel up to anything apart from sleeping at the moment. But whatever: let him think that we're going to be having fun. He'll soon realise that he's sadly mistaken. I pad over to the front door and open it to find Blayke standing there in all of his healthy glory. His smirk is mouth-watering, and he wears a simple black top and jeans that look like they're just off the runway when modelled by him. I scowl at him jealously, sniffing a little. \_I look like some fifth grade hippie in comparison.\_

"Wow," Blayke muses, "You look even worse close up."

I silently glare at him, stepping aside as he barges his way into my house. \_Why am I letting him in again? I must be mad. \_He looks around for a second, his expression folded into a slight frown as he scans around my house. Suddenly I feel quite self-conscious of Mario's toys scattered around in the lounge, and the used cereal bowls waiting in the sink. His house is kind of spotless in comparison.

"This is weird," He finally comments, "You're house is like the backwards layout of mine."

I shrug, leading him into the lounge. "I've been living here longer though, so I win."

Blayke just rolls his eyes as though I'm the immature one, leaning over to survey the movie cabinet. "So how are you feeling?"

"Better since I woke up," I reply, a little surprised that he asked, "My throat still hurts and stuff, but the headache is mostly gone now. Thanks for asking."

"You're welcome," Blayke shrugs, "Do you wanna watch a movie? I'll make you a soup or something if you want."

\_Whoa, whoa, whoa. Pause the tape and press rewind please. \_Did Blayke just say he'd cook for me?!

I stare at him in shock, and he smirks at my expression. "My speciality is extra spicy ghost pepper soup. What do you say?"

\_I knew it was too good to be true.\_

My surprised face morphs into a slight scowl. "No thanks, I'm good. You can pick a movie if you want; I'm just going to grab my mocha." Blayke nods, turning back to the movie cabinet to survey the options. For just a second there, I thought he was actually serious about the soup. Gosh, I can be so gullible sometimes. I slide off the couch to grab my drink, returning just in time to see Blayke putting a disc into the Blu-ray player. "What have you chosen?" I ask, taking a sip of my drink and collapsing into the cushions. He looks up at me as I enter, offering me a small smile.

"I chose Gone in 60 seconds," He replies, sitting on the couch beside me and pressing play on the remote. "Best ever. Plus Angelina Jolie is so bad ass in this movie."

"Good choice," I murmur, "I love this."

"Really?" Blayke raises his eyebrows. He casually slings his legs over my lap so that he's stretched along the couch. "Make yourself at home, why don't you?" "I guess first impressions really do suck then. No way did I picture you as an action and horror movie fan when I first met you."

"What was your first impression of me?" I ask him curiously, sipping from my drink as the opening credits begin to roll in on the screen. Blayke shrugs in reply, glancing over at the TV.

"I can't really rememberâ€¦I think it was pretty, but also kind of stuck up nerd. You know the kind that obsesses over computers and science shit. I guess I was wrong, eh? What about you? What was your first impression of me?" He wriggles his eyebrows playfully.

"I thoughtâ€¦that I should stay away from you," I say carefully, shoving his feet off my lap to put my legs on top. "I didn't think you'd even realise I existed to be honest. Typical bad boy player, y'know, not acknowledging the lower status people. I was wrong too." We share a short smile, before we turn to watch the opening scene play out on the screen. It's a silence, but a comfortable one. Well that is, until Blayke interrupts it by swinging his legs on top of mine again.

Some people never change.

"Blayke, I don't think it's supposed to look like that." I frown down at the pale lumpy gloop currently occupying the bowl, slightly triggering my gag reflex. I guess this is karma for making brownies without using a recipe. I don't know about you, but I have the feeling that chocolate brownies are supposed to be made with cocoa powder, and they're not supposed to have clumps of butter swimming around in them. We didn't have any cocoa powder, so Blayke improvised by using Horlicks- a sweet tasting drink powder which tastes kind of like a hundred year old diluted chocolate bar. The result doesn't look good.

"Me neither," He frowns, "But I'm sure it will taste good. Should we add more sugar just in case?"

"Blayke. You added enough sugar to make all your teeth fall out with one bite." I deadpan, coughing a little bit at the end of the sentence. In reaction, Blayke swiftly takes the bowl from me, frowning and covering the mixture to protect it. I told him that I

shouldn't be cooking because of my cold, honestly I did, but he was adamant on making lunch for me. We couldn't find any soup sachets, so we thought that brownies would be easy to make and would taste better for both of us. By the looks of this mixture, I think we were better off just eating some sandwiches. I'd just like to clarify: it's not my fault if our brownies come out as bricks; Blayke did all of the cooking.

"Don't cough near the brownie mix, Rosalina!" He whines in a playful voice, shielding the bowl from me as though it's a baby or something. "No-one likes cootie brownies."

"Cootie brownies?" I cough out a laugh, "Whatever, Moonlight. Let's just stick the mix in the oven and maybe it will turn out better than it looks now." I wrinkle my nose dubiously at the mixture as he pours it into the tin. I don't think Blayke believes me. Heck, I don't even believe me. That mixture looks like something a very old cat would puke up.

\_Ew, I don't want to think about that right now.\_

"Done," Blayke slams the oven shut with a flourish. "Twenty minutes should do, right? I guess we should probably start cleaning up." I turn to survey the kitchen, my eyebrows raised. It's not that bad. There's a little bit of flour on the floor, and Blayke accidentally dropped an egg but apart from that the damage is fairly minimal. Mainly it's just packets to put back away. I glance over at the flour, suddenly having an idea. \_Yeah, it's fairly obvious what I'm planning to do.\_

"Sure," I murmur, leaning over to grab a handful of flour behind my back. Blayke leans down to put the baking powder back (Which we used five teaspoons of- do you think that's alright?) and as he raises his head again I catapult the hand forward straight into his face, releasing the flour. Unfortunately for me, I tend to be a little bit too enthusiastic in things like thisâ€¦you can probably guess how.

"Shit!" Blayke yells, "Why did you punch me?" He inhales sharply at the pain, breathing in the flour that I've thrown all over his mouth before he digresses into an insane coughing fit, clouds of white billowing everywhere. I watch the situation, my jaw comfortably resting on the floor. \_Oh crap. Oh crap, oh crap, oh crap. You've done it now Rosalina.\_ I take a risky step back. Blayke's gaze snaps up to mine as he coughs away the last cloud of flour, and his eyes narrow dangerously.\_Oh shit. I just punched him in the jaw and almost suffocated him.\_ If looks could kill, I would be buried six feet under right now.

On the bright side, he looks like a snowman. You'd have thought it would be hard to take him seriously at this point, but the look Blayke is giving me is deadly. \_I am so screwed, I'm practically a screwdriver.\_

"Oh that's it," Blayke's voice is hard and stone now, his eyes never leaving mine. I watch in horror as he plucks an egg from the carton. \_We all know what's coming next.\_ My head is screaming at me to run, but my feet don't obey, and in less than a second Blayke's hand comes down on top of my head with a loud splat. The egg gloop runs down my face and I close my eyes in disgust as I feel it running down my

hair, cold and slimy. \_So much for having a shower this morning.\_

And just like that, Blayke begins to laugh at my disgusted face, and I stick out my tongue at him and everything is back to normal. You know, as though I didn't just punch him in the face. "Do you want an icepack for that?" I ask him awkwardly, pointing at the red mark on his jaw. He shakes his head in reply, smirking as I sneeze at the flour dispersed in the air. \_Idiot.\_

"You look so stupid," I laugh, despite the pain in my throat, "You've got flour all over your face."

"What are you talking about? I can pull anything off."

"You know, I'd like to see your point of view sometimes, but I can't fit my head that far up my ass."

"Well," Blayke pretends to pick his nails, smirking cockily, "You know what they say to people like you. Too many freaks, not enough circuses Rosalina."

I sneeze loudly in reply.

What can I say? I'm allergic to bullshit.

Just as we expected, the brownies turned out horribly. They were pale, rock hard things that tasted like something that resembled a brownie in a previous life. Needless to say, they're having a party in the trash at the moment. After a few bites, our gag reflexes kicked in and so all of that time we spent making them was wasted. We cleaned up the mess after a while; let's just hope that mom doesn't wonder where all of her eggs have disappeared to anytime soon.

"You suck at this game," Blayke comments, his mouth open wide as he lounges across the couch. I scrunch my eyebrows in concentration, chucking an M&M at him only for it to bounce off his nose again. The little coloured chocolates litter the couch, and I frown at the sight. \_What a waste of M&Ms. Blayke \_and I have stooped to this level of boredom, I know: chucking sweets at each other and seeing who can catch them in their mouth. \_What influential lives we lead.\_

"Your turn," Blayke grabs a sweet and I open my mouth as far as it can go, my eyes focused solely on the sweet. As he throws it, it bounces off my cheek and rolls to the floor again. "Wow. You suck at catching and throwing the sweets," Blayke drawls, passing me the packet, "Congrats."

"Oh shut up," I roll my eyes, bringing up my next sweet and aiming for Blayke's mouth. I took some more aspirin, and the headache is gone completely now, leaving me with nothing more than a cold and a sore throat. No doubt I'll be going to school again tomorrow. It's a shame really; I quite enjoyed hanging out with Blayke today. It was actually a lot more fun than I expected. Once again, Blayke Moonlight proved me wrong. Don't tell him that though: if his head inflates much more, he won't be able to fit through any doorways. \_Sucks to be him.\_

I take aim and throw the brown M&M, watching as it hurtles towards

Blayke, landing perfectly in his mouth. "Boom!" I grin, "What were you saying about me sucking, Blayke?"

"You've got to be kidding me princesa," Blayke rolls his eyes; "I take credit for that throw. It was all in my amazing lip action."

"Princesa?" I question curiously. "Since when do you speak spanish, Blayke?"

"Since always. I have a spanish heritage- my father was from the Wind Kingdom."

"Huh, guess you learn something new every day." I muse, popping a sweet into my mouth.

I had fun today, just hanging out with Blayke. I guess he can be surprising, and the scary thing is that we seem to be becoming quite good friends. Do I want anything more out of it? I really don't know at the moment: that's dangerous territory. But back to the matter of hand, I guess what I'm trying to say is that Blayke actually made me feel a lot less crappy today, despite my really bad headache. I should probably thank him for that, but I can't do it without inflating his head to dangerous levels. He's cocky enough as it is.

One thing is for sure though (if ever I need a way to knock Blayke's ego a little bit):

Blayke can't cook cootie brownies for shit.

#### 14. Shebang

**\*\*Ch 14: Shebang\*\***

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Dedicated to <strong>\*\*iHasCupquake\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>"Rosalina."<p>

I grit my teeth and ignore the voice, collecting my books from my locker.

"Rosalina, c'mon. Answer me."

\_Why can't some people just get the message?\_ Maybe if I slam the locker and run now, he won't chase after me. Or is that just wishful thinking? I tell you what I wish; I wish he'd freaking leave me alone. I let out a short sigh, grabbing my maths book and slamming the locker door closed. I don't want to face him, but maybe if I yell at him some more he'll get the message and leave me be. \_It's a fat chance, but I'll try anything.\_ "What do you want Marth?"

"Nothing much," He shrugs nonchalantly, but I can see the delight in his handsome features that I actually turned around and answered him. I know him that well, unfortunately for me. "I just wanted to know

how you've been recently." I grit my teeth and shove the last of my books in my backpack, turning to walk down the corridor towards my first lesson. Annoyingly, Marth follows.

"I've been just great," I mutter, "No thanks to you."

You'd think he'd have given up by now, but no. Marth has been insistently friendly since the moment I stepped into school this morning. Marth hesitates before speaking, and I can almost see a guilty sheen in his eyes. "Yeah, I deserve that one," He admits reluctantly, "But I'll make it up to you Rosalina, just you wait and see. Everything will be perfect again."\_ Who the hell is he trying to kid?\_

"Go and preach it to someone who gives a shit, Marth," I say through gritted teeth, "Leave me alone."

Marth's act drops, and he gives me a stony scowl, "You aren't going to make this easy for me, are you Rosalina? All I want is to be friends." \_You should have thought about that before you got another girl pregnant when we were dating and moved without telling me. Sucks to be you, my ass.\_

"No, I'm going to make it impossible. Just give up Marth; it's not going to happen. Now if you'll excuse me." I shoot him a final icy glare, stepping into my Biology room. No sooner have I stepped in, however, am I yanked out again with a sharp and painful tug. I curse under my breath and spin around to start yelling at him, but the person stood in front of me is the furthest from 'him' that you can get. Marth stands by my other side, but it's not his hand that's currently clawing my arm. Not unless he's suddenly got silver acrylic nails and a diamond bracelet, that is. Marth stares shell shocked at the girl, but her eyes are trained solely on me.

\_Tiana Cooper.\_ What the hell does she want?

With a small sigh, I stretch on an elasticated smile. \_Here we go again. \_"Peach," I greet, my cheeks aching, "What a pleasant surprise." I grab her hand and slowly detach it from my forearm, only making her smirk widen. \_Why do I have the feeling she's not just coming to ask me how I am? \_My fingers trace over the marks on my skin, bruises in the curve of perfectly manicured fingernails. As usual, she looks perfect. Not a hair out of place, unlike me.

"Blayne, sweetie, you look gorgeous today," Peach purrs, her icy grey eyes running over my body, scrutinizing every flaw. Her face is telling me a different story to her compliment. I look like a hobo in comparison to her designer ensemble, I'm well aware of that fact and I truly don't give a shit. What does she want with me? It's not like we make a habit to associate with each other: we hate each other's guts and that's no secret, so why does she want to talk to me now?

"Thanks," I reply in a syrupy sweet voice, so unlike to my usual drawl, "I'd say the same for you butâ€¦"

Behind her smile, Peach's eyes turn stormy. \_Good. \_"Please could I talk to you, sweetie? It'll only take a second, promise." Her gaze drifts from me over to Marth, and her eyes widen as if she's only



just noticed his presence. "Marth. Nice to see you again."

"I'm going to leave," Marth mutters, flushing bright red. He doesn't even have the courage to look me in the eye. \_Cowardly man whore.\_

Peach turns to me and I nod, glancing reluctantly into the Biology classroom before following her away from the door, further into the corridor again. The walk is eerily silent apart from the clipping of Peach's heels against the polished flooring, and my eyes narrow in concentration. \_As far as I know, I've done nothing that could possibly annoy her, so what does she want? \_It's pretty obvious that she doesn't want to compare lip-gloss brands and talk crushes. Have I done something to rub her up the wrong way? I scan my brain quickly, but I can't think of anything. It is truly a mystery.

After she's checked that we're far enough from all of the classrooms- she turns to face me and I stop walking. "So, what is it you wanted to talk to me about honey?" I drawl, mocking her with no shame. Her steely eyes show no hint of fake friendliness now, and her full lips are curled into an unattractive sneer. \_Alas, the true Peach Toadstool comes out.\_

"Drop the act Rosalina; you know we only do that in front of other people." She snaps, "I think you know what I want to talk to you about." She steps a little closer, but I refuse to give into the temptation to step backwards. That would only make her think that she intimidates me, and although that may be slightly true, there's no way I'd ever let her see it. I stand tall, staring directly into her eyes. \_Don't give her the satisfaction Rosalina.\_

"That's funny because I really don't."

"Don't you dare play dumb with me, Star," She hisses, stepping right into my face this time and shoving me back into the lockers. "I want you to stay away from Blayne Moonlight, or so help me god, I will make sure you regret it." My eyes narrow. \_What a frigging cliché. The Queen Bee wants the bad boy.\_ What; does she think I'm stepping in her way or something?

"You can have Blayne," I grit my teeth, "Get the hell out of my face Peach."

"Really? I can have him? Then back off. He doesn't want you." She leans down further, her icy glare burning holes into my skin. I've never seen a look filled with so much hatred before. \_Someone has a case of the green eyed monster.\_ I don't know what she has to hate me about, if anything I should hate her more. She's the one that Marth cheated on me with, after all. \_And then she aborted that sweet, innocent baby.\_ I think that's what makes me the angriest- she didn't even pay up the consequences of her mistake. \_She disposed of her child, just like the hundreds of used condoms she's been through ever since. \_And she wonders why Blayne doesn't want her.

She shoots me one last smirk, before turning and strutting away. My hands clench to fists by my sides. \_What? Does she think she's winning? \_She's got another freaking think coming if she does. She may own the rest of the school, but I'd prefer to be a rebel that gets beaten up than another one of her brainless cronies. To hell am I obeying her orders. I'm not a slave. I raise my chin defiantly as

she walks away. \_She wants me to stay away from one of my friends? She's got another think coming. \_She's taken enough from me, and Blayke is not going to be another thing to add to her list. I'm not going to stand for it.

And with that thought in mind, I jog back to Biology, a plan formulating slowly in my brain.

"Pshh Rosalina," Blayke whispers, poking me in the arm softly.

I raise my eyebrows, ignoring him like the bad ass I am and staring at the teacher's demonstration at the front. \_Ignoring Blayke is surprisingly fun. \_"Rosalina," He whines, poking me again, harder this time. "Rosalina, what's the answer?" This time I scoff, unable to restrain myself. No chance am I giving \_him\_ all the answers. Math isn't an easy subject: it took me long enough to work them all out myself! \_He can work them out on his own.\_ Blayke seems to sense my defiance and he groans quietly, poking me hard enough to leave a bruise, desperation showing through. He obviously knows that if he hasn't completed the homework, he'll get a detention. My lips curve up in amusement. \_Oh I can play this game all day.\_

Blayke's hand makes a dart for my exercise book, but I pull it neatly away from him, my smile morphing into a full blown grin. \_He's no match for my ninja skills. Blayke \_growls lowly under his breath. \_He's figured out that I'm playing with him, \_ I chuckle quietly. \_He knows that I'm trying to get him annoyed. Jeez, he must be really desperate for those answers.\_ "Rosalina," He whispers, a tone of desperation evident in his voice. Aw bless, the bad boy needs me. "Please can I have the answers?"

"Blayke," Mr. Bowser's voice says sharply from the front, "I ask you to pay attention when I'm doing a demonstration. Stop flirting with Rosalina and listen to what I'm trying to teach you."

A rumble of laughing spreads around the class and I blush a little bit. \_Stupid darned cheeks.\_

"I'm sorry sir," Blayke replies smoothly, "I don't understand one of the questions we had for homework. I was trying to get Riley to help me with it, but she refuses." My jaw drops open at this. \_Way to make me seem like the bad guy. At least I've actually done the homework.\_

"Well next time, please ask when I'm not in the middle of a demonstration," The teacher frowns, brow furrowing, "Rosalina please could you help Blayke with his homework? He doesn't understand, and I trust you to be able to help him." \_Oh no he didn't. \_I grit my teeth and nod stiffly in reply to his request, feeling the smugness radiate off of Blayke like a tidal wave. I don't dare look over at him: if he's smirking like I know he is, the urge to punch him in the face will be unbearable so I stare at Mr. Bowser instead. The teacher nods gratefully, before turning back to the demonstration to teach the rest of the class. \_This is beyond unfair.\_

"So," Blayke says cheerfully, "Are you going to help me Rosalina?"

"Dude, give her a break." Toad laughs from the other side of Blayke, "She looks like she wants to kill you at the moment. I don't blame

her to be honest." He grins slyly at me, fumbling with a piece of paper in his hands. \_Is he making a paper aeroplane? Blayke\_ grins cheekily in reply, poking me again in a teasing gesture. \_How did he manage to flip the situation around like that? Ugh.\_

"Copy my answer and I will castrate you," I tell him bluntly, "But you can look at the method."

Blayke nods mutely, biting back his smirk as he takes my homework sheet. Around his figure, I can see Toad throwing the paper aeroplane, aiming directly at Mr. Bowser's head. \_Oh this should be interesting.\_ It sails through the air swiftly, hitting a boy a few rows ahead of us in the centre of his back. The boy turns around, glaring around to find the culprit, but he doesn't spot Joe's mischievous smirk. I choke back my laugh as the boy turns back around to the front again, and Joe winks playfully at me, knowing what I'm chuckling at, no doubt. I roll my eyes, smiling in reply. \_These boys are just so fun to be around. \_Don't get me wrong, I love Danielle, and the small amount of girl friends that I have, but with the guys drama just doesn't exist and they don't bitch about each other. It's like having a break from all the things I hate about being a girl. "Thank you Rosalina," Blayke smirks, handing me back my sheet. I shoot him a blank look.

"Ignore him," Toad whispers amusedly, "He's just in a particularly annoying mood because he got laid last night." I cringe awkwardly. \_Definitely did not want to know that.\_

"Let's just hope you learn from your father's mistake and used protection," I joke, and Blayke shoves me lightly, making me giggle. \_I really need to stop doing that.\_

"You know, I actually am pretty good at math," Blayke comments cheerfully, a smirk growing on his lips. "Especially math in bed. You know, I'll add the bed, you subtract the clothes. You divide the legs and I'll multiply." Blayke wriggles his eyebrows playfully, "Fancy a tutor Rosalina? Extra credit homework?"

"Ew," I laugh, hitting him, "That's so disgusting! How do you manage to bring innuendos into \_math\_? That's practically art." Toad grins at my comment, chucking a piece of eraser at me. Blayke just smirks.

"Well you know, I'm pretty handy with my art too, Rosalina. I'm a whiz with a-

"I don't want to know," I interrupt, slapping my hand over Blayke's mouth. He stares at me for a second, before sticking out his tongue and pressing a long lick to my palm. \_GROSS. \_"Ew! I don't want your mouth herpes!" I shriek, pulling my hand back and wiping it on the side of his face. He squirms away, chuckling but I'm too busy wrinkling my nose to laugh along with him.

"Mouth herpes? Are you implying that I have a lot of o-"

"Shut up! This conversation is one big, fat walking innuendo!"

"Miss Star, please quiet down! This is the last warning for the back row!"

\_I'll get you back one day Blayke, I swear it.\_

A single piece of eraser flies through the air, hitting me on the cheek. Toad\_'s up to his pranks again. \_I try my hardest not to flinch as I stare calmly into Mr. Bowser's narrowed eyes, ignoring the boys chortles to my left. "I'm sorry sir; Blayke was making inappropriate comments to me." I have to choke back my laugh at Mr. Bowser's bulging eyes and flushed face, but apparently the rest of the class can't because a rumble of chuckles ricochets around the room. Blayke blushes a little besides me, and Mr. Bowser shoots him a look. \_Well there's part one of my revenge, I guess.\_

Another piece of eraser flies through the air, hitting me in the forehead this time. I shoot a glare at the laughing boys beside me. \_And people say that I'm immature.\_

"So as I was saying class:  $x$  to the power of  $f$ , all divided by the square root of  $t$  equals  $x$  to the power of minus  $y$  plus  $5t$ . Can anyone explain how I can rearrange this equation to give me my answer on what  $x$  equals?" Mr. Bowser shoots a glance at us in the back row, but luckily he chooses another unsuspecting victim instead. \_And that children, is why we never sit in the front row for Math.\_ I mean, Math with Miss Mowz is okay- I sit next to Danielle in that class. This one however, I am harassed in by the boys. Plus the teacher has a spoon rammed up his asshole somewhere, I'm certain of it.

Another piece of eraser hits me on the cheek again. \_I seriously wonder why I'm friends with these boys sometimes.\_ I shoot them a glare which only makes them laugh more. Mr. Bowser looks up at the sudden noise, "Mr. Toad, would you care to explain how you would take on this next equation?" Toad straightens in his seat and smirks.

"Why of course Mr. Bowser. For the next question, multiply by  $C$ , find the square root of  $T$  and then divide that number by the first. Then minus the  $A$ ." He says smugly, finishing off with a sly smile in Mr. Bowser's direction. My eyebrows shoot up. \_Who knew that Toad was such a math whiz? \_Even Mr. Bowser looks disgruntled- obviously taken by surprise. I bet he was getting all excited then at the thought of a new detention victim. It's quite funny to see him held up short.

Below me, my chair jerks. I gasp at the sudden movement, clinging on desperately by method of reaction time, but it's no use. One more fast jerk and I lose my balance: the chair topples over taking me with it. I land heavily on my arm, sprawled on the floor in the most unflattering of positions. \_Ouch\_. \_Oh my god that's humiliating.\_ I glance up to see Blayke and Toad practically falling off their own chairs in laughter, and that's when I realise who jerked the chair out from underneath me. \_Oh my lord, I am going to decapitate them both.\_ I flush crimson as a few people laugh, standing awkwardly back up again to see everyone staring at me with amused faces. Everyone except Mr. Bowser that is.

\_He's turned purple. Should I be worried?\_

"Blayke Moonlight! Toad!" He barks, his eyebrows furrowed and face slowly flushing blue in colour. \_I don't think I've ever seen him so angry before.\_

Maybe I should be filming this for a wildlife documentary- he looks like a frigging toucan.

"Detention! Get out of the room right now!"

"Not like I wasn't expecting it anyway," Blayke chuckles and Toad grins in agreement, before they both high-five each other. \_Boys. What are they like?\_

"See you later princess. Maths tutoring remember?" Blayke smirks, and I stick my middle finger up in reply. He laughs and blows Mr. Bowser a kiss, before he leaves the classroom with Toad in quick succession.

I have to admit, I'm growing to love that bad boy attitude of his. It keeps things interesting.

Don't ever tell my mom I said that.

"Coming out of my cage and I've been doing just fine," I sing under my breath, dancing around my room to the music as I put my newly washed clothes away. I've currently got Starbomb blasting at 150 decibels around my room because Mom and Mario have gone out leaving me with the house to myself. What's wrong with a little rave sesh every once and a while anyway? I wriggle my hips and bob my head to the music, walking over to the wardrobe to hang up my leather jacket on a coat hanger. What an interesting life I lead, I know.

"It started out with a kiss, how did it end up like this? It was only a kiss, it was only a kiss," I sing loudly. The curtains are closed at the moment, but the window is open because I'm still getting my revenge on Blayke for the Nicki Minaj marathon at 2:00am every morning for a week. This is in some way my revenge, because I know he's currently trying to study, and who wouldn't get distracted from Egoraptor perfect voice?

My point exactly.

"Jeez, if you're going to sing and dance, at least get some lessons Rosalina," I hear Blayke whining from the window and I pull back the curtain just enough to stick my tongue out at him. He's sat on his windowsill, scowling at me for interrupting his revision, no doubt. It feels kind of nice to actually get revenge on him for all he's done to me, even if it is only little bit at a time. This is only the beginning, don't worry- I'll pull out the big guns soon and then he'll be sorry he ever messed with me.

"Why would I need lessons?" I joke back to him, "I'm practically a pro already." I whisk into a full on round of air guitar as the chorus kicks in, nodding my head and slinging a few of my tops into the top drawer of my bureau. \_Dancing whilst doing chores makes them so much more fun.\_ I honestly do believe that Egoraptor is some kind of angel. I mean, he's beautiful and he has a killer voice: he's just too perfect to be human.

"You do realise I can see you dancing through your curtain right?" Blayke drawls, and I freeze, my head snapping to the side. \_The curtains are still closedâ€¦what? \_"I can see the silhouette," Blayke explains, as though reading my thoughts.

My cheeks tinge slightly pink, but I just joke it off. "Why aren't you a lucky lad, eh?"

"I would have to disagree with you there. Your moves are worse than my grandmas."

"And you would know your grandmas moves, how?" I pull back the curtain again to wink at Blayne. \_He's not the only one who can pull a good innuendo.\_

He just stares blankly at me, "You're messed up."

"I know. Not as messed up as you though." I retort in a singsong voice, folding up one of my vest tops. My underwear is stuffed under my pillow at the moment in precaution- I don't want Blayne to see it. \_He still has my bra.\_ I completely forgot about that.

"But you love me anyway," Blayne rolls his eyes, "I mean c'mon. I'm irresistible. You can take a picture if you want- it'll last longer."

"Modest too," I roll my eyes, "Seriously, you're the whole shebang Blayne."

"Shebang I am."

\_Oh great, he's turned into freaking Yoda now.\_

This boy is so unpredictable, it's not even funny.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Princess Rosalina Fanboy15: Hi Madison, What is your opinion of Abortion.<strong>

\*\*Madison Star: Dudes, it's her body, her choice. You can't force someone raise a child, when they don't want it. I think it's dumb that people in the U.S. Want to ban abortion.\*\*

\*\*Princess Rosalina Fanboy15: Surprisingly I agree with you Maddie.\*\*

\*\*Madison Star: Thank you Creator.\*\*

## 15. Beach Time

\*\*Ch \*\*\*\*\*15: Beach Time\*\*

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Dedicated to <strong>\*\*LuigiLovesCupcakes\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>ã^...8<strong>Blayne Moonlightã^...8<strong>

"The Wheels on the bus go round and round!" Toad's voice bounces around the car as he belts out the well-known children's rhyme, holding his chest dramatically, "Round and Round, round and round."

Rosalina, sat beside me, chuckles quietly at his eagerness before turning to glance out of the window again at the scenery blurring past us. \_She does that a lot.\_ Today is the day of the beach, and it should be interesting to say the least. I won't deny that I'm looking forward to it; I haven't been to the beach in ages and with these guys and Rosalina- there's no telling what could happen. Plus, Toad is on a huge sugar high right now, which is an added bonus.

"Dude, we're in a car," I deadpan, rolling my eyes at my hyper best friend. \_Seriously, what is he on?\_

"I know! Jeez, I'm just trying to get us all in the mood," Toad pouts. \_Someone should record this- he's acting like a five year old.\_ "Besides," he continues cheerfully, "I'm a freaking awesome singer." Rosalina snorts quietly beside me, and I crack a small smirk at the sound. I think we all wish that Toad's statement was true, because then we wouldn't have bleeding ears right now.

"Whatever bro, don't let them kill your buzz," Waluigi chuckles from the passenger seat, turning around to offer Rosalina a small smile which she returns. Something tightens in my chest at the sight, but I turn around and gaze out of Rosalina's window, ignoring it. \_Hey, she's rubbing off on me with this window thing.\_ I notice Rosalina digging out her phone and a pair of ear buds from her pocket, and I nudge her slightly with my shoulder. "Hey, can I listen too? Toad's opera is making my eardrums explode."

"I heard that!"

Rosalina chuckles, her wide blue eyes twinkling with humour as she hands me an ear bud. "Should I put on Britney Spears?" She ponders aloud, teasing me, "Taylor Swift? Hilary Duff?"

I give her a blank look in reply. "Frankly I'm worried that you actually have those artists on your phone. If they can even be called artists that is."

"Don't worry, I don't," She chuckles, scrolling through her music app, "Apart from Taylor Swift that is- she's good. But I'll put on AC/DC just for your sake." \_I like a girl with a good music taste.\_ I shake my head, clearing my thoughts. What the hell did I just think? My brain needs to shut up, that's for sure.

"Guys, can you just date already?" Luigi groans from the driving seat, "The sexual tension in this car is practically unbearable. My boy senses are picking up on it." \_Awkward much, Luigi? \_Jeez, he sure knows how to make things uncomfortable. I'll get him back for it later.

"Are you saying you have a boner?" Rosalina raises her eyebrows.

"Maybe."

"Just think of your grandma in the shower. Naked." \_Ew. Yep, that should definitely cut it.\_

"Ahh!" Toad yelps loudly, "I'm imagining it too!" Dylan bursts into laughter at this.

"You're going to make Luigi crash the car," I laugh, "He looks horrified enough as it is." I glance over at Luigi, letting out another dark chuckle. I'm not exaggerating: at the moment Luigi is blinking repeatedly, as though he hopes to get rid of the image that way, not to mention the bright red flush his face has taken. \_Serves him freaking right, manwhore. \_Screw 'sexual tension'.

I pop the ear bud in, nodding my head slightly as 'Highway to Hell' pounds in my ears. She doesn't have her music as loud as I do, but it's still pretty loud. The scenery of Lindale whisks past us as Luigi drives and my gaze seems to fix on every tree and rock and speck of sand- remembering it. Although I haven't been living here for much over a month, I did live here when I was little and I've come back every single summer for quite some time now to stay with my aunt and Mona. I glance over at Rosalina. \_Yep, she and Mona would definitely get on well. Luigi\_, Waluigi and Toad have been friends with me since I was about three years old, plus Toad lives on the same street as my aunt which meant that I saw them all pretty much every day for all those summers- that's how I know them all so well.

I don't really know what we're planning to do at the beach today- hang out, I guess? The surfboards are attached to the roof of Luigi's car, a dark Chevy truck with the license plate peeling off at the back. I guess we'll be doing some of that. "Can you surf?" I ask Rosalina curiously, and she bites her lip and shakes her head. "Guess we'll have to teach you," I continue, "It's difficult though."

"I'm sure she'll get the hang of it," Toad intercedes, winking at Rosalina. "If she doesn't, then it'll be funny to watch her failing, so it's a win-win situation for all of us." I smirk and high five him, feeling Rosalina groan beside me. She hates being teased, but it's funny watching her spout fiery comebacks so I don't ever stop doing it. It's way too much fun to see her reactions. "Fail like your dad's condom you mean," She mutters under her breath. I don't think Toad heard it, but I can't restrain the smirk from tugging at my lips. The car ride is only a short one to the beach, but already she's amusing me. She never hesitates to make me laugh.

\_Eugh, I sound like a freaking sap. Let me check to see if my penis is still there, one sec.\_

Still there, and bigger than ever. I smirk.

As we pull into the small beach car park, I feel a small twinge of excitement in my stomach, seeing the waves. \_Not too choppy, but big enough for a decent day of surfing. \_The beach in Lindale is small and sandy, a beach for locals rather than tourists. There are a few small shops in the road behind it, but nothing major. An ice cream shop, a surf shack and a caf   where they sell the world's most delicious milkshakes. I don't even think we have a hotel in a fifty mile radius, that's how lonely this place is. Where I lived in North Carolina was the opposite end of the spectrum, but I prefer this place more and more by the day for a number of reasons. I glance over at Rosalina.

"I call dibs on the red surfboard!" I shout as I exit the car, and Luigi curses under his breath.

"Dude, you know I love that surfboard."



I smile smugly in reply, leaning up to untie the ropes holding them to the roof. The red one is practically made for me: slim, sexy and gives one hell of a ride.

Damn, I wish I could sell innuendos for a living.

Waluigi fist pumps me and I grin as we slide four of the surfboards down together, leaving the last one for Toad to carry. That one is a slightly smaller, slimmer one that used to be Luigi's. We figured that Rosalina could use it, due to her petite figure. I glance over at her, to see her laughing with Luigi, her ear buds firmly in place. Her slender figure is hugged with a red and white tie dye belly top matched with some dark denim shorts that elongate her legs in a flattering manner. I gulp and look away. \_I shouldn't be getting so distracted by her.\_

"Right guys, let's roll," Luigi slings an arm around Rosalina, locking his car over his shoulder. I grab a couple of the surfboards and slide them under each arm, Waluigi following suit. My eyes trail over the beach scenery. It's not crowded, luckily, but there are a few people dotted along the sands because it's a hot day. Usually it would be empty. The sun beats down on my olive skinned arms and I smirk, clutching the surfboards tighter. \_The ladies love a tanned guy.\_

After laying down the towels and piling up the surf boards, Rosalina collapses down onto the edge of her towel, flinging her beach bag carelessly beside her. "So," She grins, "Are we going surfing? I can't wait." Her long pale legs curl up beneath her. Jeez, \_I need to stop looking at her legs.\_

I glance at the rest of guys, smirking and collapsing down next to her. "You sure you can handle it?"

"I can keep up," She winks, and I raise my eyebrows, a grin spreading onto my lips. \_Since when was she cracking innuendos? Huh, I like this Rosalina. \_I look over at Luigi, and he shrugs.

"Come on then. Don't see why we can't start now," Waluigi grins, pulling his shirt over his head. We're all wearing our swim shorts already, thank god. It would be more than a little awkward if we weren't. Luigi whoops and pulls off his shirt, kicking his converse off as best as he can. Then he and Waluigi grab a board each, jogging down to the sea. Rosalina watches them go, her jaw agape, no doubt at their chests. Well, what does she expect? Waluigi is quarterback and Luigi works out regularly to please the ladies. Toad is a little smaller than the rest of us, and he has a less defined six pack. Mine is going strong, though. "You coming bro?" I smirk at Toad, and we both pull off our shirts, grabbing a surfboard each. I sense Rosalina's eyes on me. "I think you've got a bit of drool there," I smirk, pointing at her chin.

"Sorry, your mom must have left it there last night," She retorts smugly, "You guys go ahead. I'll catch up." I glance over at Toad and he nods. \_Right then. \_I swing my red surfboard under my arm and jog down towards the sea to meet up with Luigi and Waluigi. The water laps at my feet, cool and refreshing, and I wade further until I'm at knee height. \_I love the sea.\_

"Where's Rosalina, dude?" Waluigi asks me, and I frown. \_Wouldn't he like to know?\_

"She's coming after us," I reply shortly, running my wet hand through my hair.

"Is that her coming now?" Luigi wolf whistles, and I spin around. Rosalina is jogging down the beach, her hair in dark loose curls that frame her porcelain face and wide blue eyes. She wears a light blue bikini with Aztec print bottoms, emphasising her toned, ever so slightly tanned skin. Her surfboard is clutched under her arm and her cheeks are flushed with excitement. \_Shit.\_ I gulp and turn around quickly so that I don't embarrass myself by ogling her. I can already feel my cheeks heating up. \_Jeez Rosalina, what are you doing to me? \_Not just me though, I think, glancing at the other boys. Luigi is eyeing her up, but I know that he'd never advance on Rosalina in any way, shape or form- they're just friends, and he cares about her feelings much more than he lets on. Toad's smile is purely plutonic and I know he only thinks of her as a close friend. Waluigi's however, is a completely different story.

"Hey guys," She grins, "Are we going or what?"

Luigi nods, wading deeper into the water with his surfboard flat beside him. Toad grins at her, "You look great Rosalina!" She smiles back at him, before he delves deeper into the water, jogging to keep up with Luigi who is about waist-deep now, waiting for the first wave. \_Someone's eager.\_  
>"C'mon," I smirk, grabbing her hand and dragging her further into the water. I ignore the tingles that shoot up my arm. Blayke<em>, you're turning into a pussy.<em> "We need to hurry up." She nods obediently, following me further into the water. Waluigi trails beside us.

"So what exactly do I do then?" Rosalina asks awkwardly, glancing down at her surfboard bobbing on the water beside her. \_She's nervous: she's biting her lip.\_

"You should probably just start off with paddling," Waluigi suggests, "So just get on the surfboard and float for a while. You can swim right? There's no real current or anything here, so you don't need to worry about that. Just paddle towards the waves, and when you hit them, lift up the top half of your body." He helps her onto the surfboard, shamelessly glancing down at her ass, before blushing crimson and looking away. She clutches onto the surfboard, breathing heavily, completely unaware.

"Okay," She mutters to herself, "Like this?" She starts to paddle slowly towards the gentle waves, bobbing up and down. I shake my head, grabbing her surfboard to stop her.

"You need to go faster, or else you'll be dunked on. Here, curve your hands like this," I grab her hand, curving it into the right position. She smiles gratefully back at me, before she sets off paddling much faster this time. "Like that!" I yell after her, grinning. I slide onto my own surfboard, paddling hard to keep in line with her. The water isn't deep and the waves are gentle here, so even if she does fall off, she'll be fine. Waluigi bobs up beside us, grinning. "Okay, aim for a few waves, lifting your body when you hit them so you don't get dunked on." I push her forward and she begins

furiously paddling. She hits the first wave, a gentle one, without a hitch- doing exactly as we've told her. The second one however, she wobbles a little bit, sliding off into the water.

As she reappears, she's grinning and clutching onto her surfboard. "That was so good! Let me try again." It takes her a few attempts to actually get back on the surfboard, meanwhile I'm laughing at every single fail, but soon enough she's back on the board and staring longingly at Toad and Luigi, who are riding the bigger waves in the distance. Waluigi has paddled off to join them by now. "I want to try that at least once today," She mutters to me, "Can you teach me how to stand up on the surfboard?"

"Okay, but beware you'll probably fall off," I point out, sliding off my own board to steady hers so that she can stand up. She shakes her head, brushing my remark off, and I chuckle. "Right, so first lie down in the paddling position." She does as she's told, "Now keep your knees together, that's important for balance, and slide your legs underneath you so that you're kneeling." She clutches the surfboard so hard that her knuckles turn white and I can see the determination on her face as she slides her legs up, wobbling precariously. As if by a miracle though, she doesn't fall off.

"Now get your balance, and let go of the board," I order, holding the board steady so that it doesn't bob away. Her eyes widen as she hears this instruction, but nevertheless she takes a deep breath and steadies herself- her hands flying out either side for balance. "Now, slide one leg up. Slowlyâ€|slowly \_Rosalina, slowly-\_"

She slides off the board with a splash and I roll my eyes. \_Did she not listen to a word I said? How difficult is it to understand the word slowly? \_She emerges again with a sheepish expression on her face, her dark hair slick against her back. Her cheeks are puffed red with effort. Well, at least she's trying, I guess. "Slowly," She repeats, clambering back onto the surfboard. I watch as she steadies herself into a paddling position, sliding her legs up into a kneel. She wobbles a little bit here, but manages to steady herself, luckily for me. \_I hate being splashed with salt water. \_Now the hard bit. Ever so slowly, she brings up a foot and steadies herself on the board, and I raise my eyebrows. She must have a pretty good balance to be able to do that- usually it takes at least a week of practice before you can stand up on the boardâ€|will she make it? She takes a deep breath and hesitantly moves the other foot, rolling onto her tiptoe before standing up. For one glorious second, I see the delight on her face, before she tumbles down into the water again. When she emerges, she's smiling like a lunatic. "I did it!"

"You did," I grin, "Well done. It usually takes days for someone to stand up like you did then."

"A few weeks and I'll be as good as Luigi," She winks, "He'd better watch his back."

\_And I should probably watch mine.\_

"I can't believe you guys forgot to bring sun cream," Rosalina rolls her eyes, scanning through the shelves of the shop. "What kind of idiots don't bring sun screen to the beach? Now Waluigi is burnt to a crisp, and whose fault is it hmm?" She raises her eyebrows, sending me a pointed look. I shrug helplessly. \_It's not like I was told to

bring the sun cream. I don't burn: Waluigi should have brought his own freaking sun cream. \_She rolls her eyes at my expression, her lips quirking into the smallest of smiles. "Hey Moonlight. Should I get these?" She slides on a pair of kids Hello Kitty sunglasses, stretching their frame to the breaking point. \_She's going to break those if she's not careful, and I'm sure as hell not paying for them.\_

"Definitely," I remark sarcastically, "You look like such a big girl, Rosalina."

"Aw aren't you a cutie?" She teases, "You should try these ones on." She throws me a pair of pink rimmed heart shaped sunglasses, framed with diamantes. "They're totes your colour," She winks.

"I'm not so sure about those ones. These are definitely very me though," I wink back at her, playing along by holding up a small pair of Mickey Mouse sunglasses. \_Are these for babies or something? They're tiny. \_"Oh wait; you're the one with the Mickey Mouse bra!"

"Don't ya know it," She pouts, her eyes hiding behind a giant pair of aviators. How on earth she makes those look good, I'll never know. I chuckle, glancing around the interior of the small shop. It's a typical surf shack- sand scarring the floor and surfboards stacked up against the back walls. We're looking for sun cream, because Waluigi got his pale-ass self sunburnt, and somehow it's my fault. \_Don't really see the logic there.\_

"Here you go, this one's the cheapest," Rosalina shoves a bottle in my hand, "Go get it!"

"Why am I buying it?" I protest, stepping backwards from the direction of the counter.

"Because you're a good friend and I don't have any money with me blah blah blah," Rosalina laughs, shoving me, "Go!"

\_The things I do for friendship. \_I roll my eyes and place the bottle on the counter, pressing the little bell to get the attention of a worker. My eyes run around the shop interior as I wait. It's dimly lit and quite big, but cramped all the same. Swimsuits line one wall, and surfboards line another, with small aisles of wetsuits and sun cream and jewellery in-between. A jewellery rack stands on the corner of the counter, and my eyes run over it, lingering on one small bracelet in particular. It's a hand painted wooden bead bracelet, with a small shark tooth, an anchor and a surfboard charm hanging from it. \_Rosalina. \_I glance to the side to check she's not there, before grabbing one and sliding it onto the counter beside the sun cream bottle. \_Don't ask me why I'm buying it, because frankly I don't even know.\_The worker turns up, a shaggy haired blonde guy with a nose piercing. "Sorry to keep you waiting," He smiles lazily, glancing down at the items on the counter, "That'll be \$8.35 please." I hand him a ten dollar bill, watching as he packs away the bracelet into a small paper bag. A tiny bead of sweat runs down the nape of my neck from the heat. \_What am I doing?\_

"Thanks. Keep the change," I mutter, grabbing the bag and the sun cream bottle. I must be crazy: why am I buying her a gift? It's not like we're dating, and it's not her birthday or Christmas coming up

soon. Blayne Moonlight\_, you are officially turning into a sensitive pussy. \_What's she going to think of me if I give her that? I step out of the shop with a sigh, turning to see Rosalina leaning against the wall, waiting for me. "Finally," She grins, "Let's go back to the guys. Waluigi needs his sun cream."

And just like that, I longed to give her the bracelet again.

What the hell is happening to me?

"Guys, we're going back into the water," Luigi and Toad grin, clutching their surfboards. I sit up a little bit, squinting at them through the harsh light. They've literally spent most of the day in the water, their skin is practically sun-baked and they're going back in? Idiots. I roll my eyes and continue to apply sun cream to my legs and arms. Rosalina lies next to me with closed eyes behind her Ray Bans, and her ear buds in, Waluigi lying similarly on the other side. I've hardly known what to say to her since I bought that bloody bracelet. The paper bag is still lying on the towel next to me, burning into my skin to remind me of its presence. I don't know what I'm going to do with it: whether I'll give it to her or not, so I'm just keeping it hidden for now.

"I'll do your back if you like," Rosalina offers, smiling a little at me. Her top is back on now, much to our disappointment, but her legs glow slightly bronzed in the sun. She slides her Ray Bans up onto her forehead, squinting in the light. I nod in reply to her offer, smirking.

"Don't act like you're not desperate to, Rosalina."

She bats me lightly with one hand, sliding to come and sit behind me. I breathe deeply and sigh, watching Luigi and Toad head back down the beach towards the waves. I'd join them if I didn't feel so conflicted inside. Normally I would ask Waluigi what to do, seeing as he's kind of the go-to-guy for advice and shit, but I can't help but feel slightly irritated by him today and I don't really know why. I hiss out my breath as I feel Rosalina's cold finger on my back, interrupting me from my thoughts. She laughs lightly at my reaction.

Slowly, I feel her finger trail up and down my back, drawing out a pattern or something with the ice cold sunscreen. "What are you doing?" I ask her curiously. I try to turn around to look, but obviously I can't see my back so that's pretty pointless. She doesn't answer my question, instead continuing to trail the pattern into my back with a single ice cold finger, making me shiver as she comes to an end, where she rubs all of the sun cream in.

"I wrote 'Smile' on your back," She says to me, her lips tugging upwards. "You look grumpy."

"I'm not grumpy," I chuckle, "Just conflicted."

"Well then you can carry on conflicting," She pokes her tongue out at me, "I'm going swimming, so you can join us when you're ready. Coming Waluigi?" Waluigi nods beside me, rising to follow her down the beach, but my eyes don't stray from her. \_Smile. She wrote smile on my back. \_I watch her strolling down the beach, and my eyes drift over to the paper bag at my side. I should give this to her.

\_But why? \_A voice asks me from inside. \_Why do you want to give her the bracelet?\_

I groan, frustrated. What is happening to me? I never feel like this towards girls. Heck, I never even think of buying them gifts. They buy \_me\_ gifts and throw themselves at me; it's never the other way around. So why do I feel this need, this longing to give this bracelet to Rosalina? She's done nothing for me. It's not her birthday, I'm not her boyfriend and it's not like I owe it to her or anything. \_Why?\_

I don't know, but I'm going to try and find out.

I grab the paper bag and rip it open, sliding the slightly warm bracelet into my hand. \_She'll like it, I know she will. I just hope she doesn't ask too many questions, because they're questions I don't know the answers to.\_ I stand up and brush the sand off my chest. Something twinges nervously in my stomach. Blayne Moonlight\_ does not get nervous.\_ The sand scorches my bare feet as I head towards the water, already regretting my decision, but it's not long before they falter altogether anyway. The eagerness to answer my question disappears in an instant and I stand paralysed at the scene playing out just ten metres in front of me. There, in the shallow waves not even reaching knee height, Waluigi's arm wraps around Rosalina's waist and he pulls her to him, his lips bearing down on hers. \_Waluigi is kissing Rosalina.\_

A pang hits my gut, and my vision tinges ever so slightly red, but everything is clear as crystal now.

\_The answer to my questions. The reason I feel irritated with Waluigi. The need to buy her that bracelet.\_

Why did I not think of this solution before?

Blayne mother effing Moonlight.

You like Rosalina.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Princess Rosalina Fanboy15: Hi Skyler, do you like the version of your mother in the story?<strong>

\*\*Skyler Star: My and Rosetta have been talking about it, We love her it's better than her Age of Extinction version.\*\*

## 16. Two Small Fish

\*\*Ch \*\*\_\*\*16:Two Small Fish\*\*\_

I know the kiss feels wrong from the start.

I don't really know why. It's damp and sweet and everything a kiss should be. It just doesn't feel natural. It felt like how I'd imagine kissing a brother would feel, rather than a love interest. Too familiar. Too plutonic. No spark. I pull away after a mere second, pressing my fingertips on Waluigi's chest to push him gently

backwards. Already I see him tensing up, realising what his mistake was, and my heart aches for him in that second. "Hey," I say softly, catching his attention. "I'm so sorry, Waluigi." I pull him into a small hug, feeling a pang of guilt for the rejection that shines in his eyes.

"It's okay," He mutters. "Let's forget it even happened." He musters up the courage to crack a small smile, despite the awkward situation, although he doesn't meet my eyes.

I nod stiffly, before turning and heading back towards the beach, feeling numb and shocked. \_I don't look back. I can't. \_My hands are shaking, my breathing is funny and it feels like I don't even know how to walk anymore. Completely alien. I shake my head to clear my thoughts, focusing on the towels in the distance. I shouldn't be feeling guilty about this; at least I rejected him softly. The worst thing I could have done in that situation was accept the kiss, because that would mean I was stringing him along even though I don't feel the same way. I didn't do anything wrong. I glance up at the towels hopefully, but Alec is nowhere to be seen. \_I could have used someone to distract me right now.\_ I sigh softly, popping my ear buds in and sitting down to wait. If Blayne isn't here to distract me, then music is my second choice. It's getting to about four 'o' clock now, we should probably be leaving soon anyway.

Let's just hope things between Waluigi and I aren't too awkward.

As expected, the car journey home is anything but comfortable.

Waluigi and I have barely glanced in each other's direction, nor have me and Blayne made any conversation. I have no idea what's up with Moonlight, but I don't like it one little bit. I'm not used to seeing the usually cocky, annoying Blayne Moonlight being soâ€¦distant and silent. Even Toad and Luigi seem to have picked up on it, and they're joking back and forth trying to fill the awkward silence in the car. What's wrong with us? I bite my lip and turn to glance out of the window. I have no idea how to act with Waluigi anymoreâ€¦I feel so bad. He's cute and sweet and smart, and I'm just the world's biggest idiot for not liking him back. What's wrong with me?

As the car pulls up outside of mine and Blayne's houses, I murmur an awkward goodbye to the boys and climb out, Coldplay blasting through my earphones to try and fill the silence that can't be covered. "Bye," I murmur to Blayne, but he nods in acknowledgement, not meeting my eye. He looks distracted, lost in thought. What has happened to all of the boys today? I groan as Blayne heads his separate way, before turning on my heel to open my front door. \_I hope things go back to normal soon, because I don't know how much more I can take of this awkwardness. \_What on earth is wrong with Blayne?

"Hey mom," I call as I enter the house, kicking off my flip-flops and dumping my beach bag to the floor. Sea salt is crusted into my curls and my skin feels sticky with that crappy cheap sunscreen. I could really use a shower. "I need some advice." I enter the kitchen, knowing she'll be in there, and sure enough she's elbow deep in cake mix. \_Hmm cake.\_

"What's up sweetie?" She asks me, looking at me with a concerned

expression. She tucks a loose wispy curl that has escaped her ponytail behind her ear, getting flour on her cheek in the process. \_How can one person make that much mess? Usually she's a pro in the kitchen. Neat and efficient, that's my mom. \_"You can tell me anything. What's happened?"

I hesitate. Do I really want my mom to get involved in all of this? \_But I need her help. \_"Okayâ€|Well you know today I went to the beach, right? I went with Waluigi, Luigi, Toad and Blayke." She nods in reply, gesturing for me to continue and I sigh, sliding into a bar stool. "Well it was so much fun at first, but then in the last half an hour, Waluigi kissed me."

"And did you kiss him back?"

I shake my head.

"I see."

"Yep," I sigh, glaring down at the breakfast bar. \_I should have kissed him back. It would have saved all this trouble. \_But surely I shouldn't have to kiss him back? Why did he freaking kiss me in the first place? I hate him for making everything so bloody complicated-it's not like I wanted to be involved in this! \_Ugh, I'm so confused. \_"It was really awkward on the way home," I pick slowly at my fingernails, not meeting my mom's eye, "Even Blayke's not talking to me, and that's \_Blayke\_ for Pete's sake. I don't know what's up with him."

Mom considers this for a second, her hands faltering from mixing the delicious looking mixture in the bowl. "Maybe he's jealous," She shrugs, "Could be something going on at home. Could be something at school, or could be something personal. Why don't you ask him?"

"I don't know," I bite my lip, "He seemed a little off with me."

"Well make him 'on' with you then," She shrugs. The left sleeve of her checked top slides down her arm tauntingly, and she glares at it before shifting it back up, ignoring the flour that is now dusted all over her shirt sleeve. Why is she dressed so casually anyway? I swear she mentioned something about a meeting tonight. I remember because she asked me to babysit Mario. Just as I think of his name, I hear feet thunder down the stairs, and mom and I both wince at the noise. \_Speak of the devil and he shall appear. \_"Mom," He bursts in, his eyes narrowed and glare directed at me, "Rosalina stole my Lego!"

"What? Why would I steal your Lego?" I reciprocate, wrinkling my nose at the suggestion. "What use do I have for Lego? Other than shoving it up your ass-. "

"Rosalina," Mom cuts me off with a sharp look, before turning to Mario. "Mario, honey, are you sure you've searched everywhere for them? I don't think Riley really wants your Lego." The look she gives him is also patronising. \_Ha, she probably took the Lego. I think she's stepped on those little things one too many times. \_My eyes narrow, taking note of the smile that she's biting her lip to restrain. Oh yeah, she's guilty alright.



"Yes mom, I searched \_everywhere\_, " Mario groans, "Rosalina must have taken them! Who else would?"

"Oh I can think of someone," I raise my eyebrows at Mom, and she blushes. "Mario, have you ever thought that maybe Mom might have taken them? She does have a tendency to step on the lethal little things." I step a little closer to her like a predator stalking prey, the grin wide on my face, and her smirk springs free. Mario's eyes narrow on her too. \_Damn, I'm practically the next Sherlock. Take a step back and watch me go mofos.\_

"Alright, I did it! I did it!" Mom raises her hands in surrender, laughing. "Please don't kill me!"

Mario launches at her and I do too, trapping her hands behind her back while Mario scrambles to tickle her neck, her most sensitive spot. "Stop!" She laughs, squirming "I'm sorry! You can have them back!" That's right, even my mom is ticklish, and don't think I'm not aware of it.

My family can be annoying, but every now and then I'm reminded of just how much I love them.

And how lucky I am to have them still here with me.

"So what's up between you and Blayke? You haven't fed me any gossip for ages," Danielle asks curiously, shovelling for a handful of popcorn from the bowl. My eyes, that were previously fixed on Luigi (now that is one fine piece of man) drop to the floor before meeting hers, and I sigh. It's been a week since that day at the beach and I've hardly spoken to any of the boys. Toad and I had a text conversation, and I've talked to Tanooki a little bit in lessons but the Blayke front is coming up strangely silent, despite the fact that we live less than three metres away from each other. His curtains remain closed, and when I see him around school, he looks through me like I'm invisible. I'm not going to lie; it hurts like a female dog. Unfortunately, I haven't yet mustered up the courage to go and demand why he's ignoring me.

He's such a jerk.

As expected though, I haven't really spoken to Waluigi either. But at least he actually acknowledges my presence, even if it is with a slightly awkward smile and blush. He's not the one treating me like I'm a speck of dust. I grab the remote to pause teen wolf, sitting up from my slouch on Danielle's couch. Danielle utters a mumble of protest at the sudden seriousness. "He hasn't spoken to me in a week," I mumble, grabbing a few gummy bears and avoiding eye contact. "I don't know what's up with him."

"So why haven't you asked him?" Violet asks me incredulously, nose wrinkled in confusion. We're at her house currently, having a sleepover. The scent of nail varnish and microwave popcorn is pungent in the air- the smells of a night filled with chick flicks, hot guys on TV and girly gossip. I'm far from a girly girl, but nights like this are what keep me sane. Sometimes a girl just needs to feel a little bit of beautiful, drool at some cute guys and unload her feelings with her best friend. It's one of the reasons I love Pauline so much.

"I don't know how to approach him," I protest, "He's acting like I don't even exist!" My voice comes out incredibly whiny and sad, and I have to fight the urge to shudder at how I'm acting. \_Why am I so freaking distressed at this situation? Blayke's an annoying jerk, I should be happy that he's gone.\_ I reach for another gummy bear sulkily, but Pauline slaps my hand away, sitting up herself. \_An annoying jerk that I'm growing more and more fond of.\_

"I'll tell you how to approach him!" Danielle huffs, "You go up to him in school, put your finger on his chest and ask him why he's been treating you like shit!" \_Oh she's getting angry now. Whether it is at me or Blayke, I don't know, but she's angry.\_ Seeing my glum expression, Pauline's face softens and she shifts closer to me, shoving the pillows from our Teen Wolf marathon out of the way. "You really like him don't you?" She murmurs, and my head snaps up. "You do, I can tell just from the way you are now Rosalina." She mutters, "I know you just that well."

My head spins. Do I like Blayke Moonlight? I wouldn't know- it's been years since I've last liked a boy, and that didn't exactly turn out well. What are the symptoms of having a crush? Does my heart beat faster when he's talking to me? \_Kind of- it's more like a buzz of happiness though. \_Does he give me tingles when I touch him? I think back to when we were holding hands. \_Yes. \_Do I think about him a lot?\_ Wellâ€|yes. Do\_ I like Blayke Moonlight? "Yes," I breathe out, my face creased into a frown. My head snaps up and I look Pauline in the eye. "I do, don't I? I like Blayke Moonlight."

"Indeed you do," Pauline cracks a smile, settling back into the cushions and reaching for the popcorn. I groan, slapping a hand to my head and cursing a little under my breath. \_This was not a part of the plan. I was supposed to be \_friends\_ with him, not have a crush on him! \_I knew the dangers of falling for a playboy, and I've always felt sympathetic for the girls that fall to their feet. Now I've become one of them. \_I'm no longer unique, no longer different. I'm just another one of his fan girls. \_I cringe at that thought. Nope, definitely not a fan girl. At least I have that to rely on: I will never be one of his fan girls. But is that why Blayke's been treating me differently? Am I just another play thing for him?

Have I come to my expiry date?

"Oh shoot," I mumble, cringing into the couch, "I'm so stupid. I like him."

"It's okay," Pauline soothes me, "People get crushes: it's natural. You're just distressing because you don't know how any of this works anymore. The last time you had a crush; it was on your childhood sweetheart." \_That's true.\_ I nod and reach for more popcorn, sinking further into the cushions. \_He can't like me back. I'm definitely not his type. \_His type is tanned, leggy blondes- he's told me enough times for me to remember. Guess I'll just have to suck it up and get over it.

"What about Waluigi?" Danielle asks me, changing the subject to try and distract me. \_I don't think that's going to work- it'll be all I ever think about now.\_

"Well he at least acknowledges me, so that's a start. I just hope the awkwardness doesn't last for much longer. I don't know how to act

around him anymore," I explain, shoving popcorn in my mouth. "What about you? How's library boy?"

'Donkey Kong?" Danielle blushes, "He's really good thank you." I give her a look, gesturing for her to spill, and a lovesick grin spreads across her face. \_I've never seen Pauline have a crush before- this is so strange. \_"He's really sweet Rosalina," She groans, "But you know me. I don't really do long relationships. This is like throwing a tiny, tiny fish into a huge pond. I don't know what I'm doing; I'm just kind of going with the flow, hoping something good comes out of it."

"Wait, what? You two are dating?!"

"Yeah, he asked me out today," She smiles shyly, "I was planning on calling you earlier, but I figured I could just tell you here instead." A grin spreads over my face, and I leap over the cushions and blankets to tackle her into a hug. "That's amazing Pauline! I'm so happy for you!" The popcorn bowl rolls to the side of the couch, before landing loudly on the floor. Popcorn scatters everywhere, but luckily the bowl doesn't break. Pauline beams back at me. \_I don't think I've ever seen her this buzzed before; she must really like this guy.\_

"Get your fat ass off me and clear up that mess," Danielle groans, playfully swatting me with her hand.

I clamber off her, sticking my tongue out. "What a pair we are," I joke, "Two tiny fish in two big ponds."

"Got that right."

I stare through the window, scowling at the curtains of the opposite sill. He hasn't opened those curtains for a freaking week! I don't know what I've done wrong. I turn my glare to my laptop again. I should be doing my homework, but I can't seem to concentrate on anything else but Blayke freaking Moonlight. Why does he have to be such a jerk? And why do I have to like him? He's bad for me, I know that. Is he expecting me just to go along with him treating me like shit? To act like I'm lucky to have hung out with him for a limited period of time? He's got to frigging think again if he does.

"Rosalina, can I ask you something?" My mom asks, walking into my room. There's something called knocking these days. I swear no-one seems to know the meaning of that word anymore.

"What's up mom?" I sigh, spinning around in my desk chair. She perches on the end of the bed, offering me a small smile. \_Uh oh, what's she done? She's trying to warm up to me, I know that smile.\_

"I have a dinner coming up with some founders of the surgery. It's a scheme to relationships down at the surgery, and try and persuade our founders them into paying into the expansion of the building. It allows the founders to ask any questions about the expansion in a relaxed and comfortable setting, before we move onto the presentation." She says, "I would appreciate it if you would be there with me. The organisers thought it would be a good idea if it was a family thing, so Mario will be coming too, alongside some other

children. They'll be hanging out in the kids area, but obviously you'll be staying with the adults."

"Right," I say, "So you want me to come to another work dinner with you? That's fine mom."

"But it's not just a work dinner," She explains, "This is an upper class dinner held at a country club. We need to get this money, or there will be no expansion. We'll have to get you a decent dress, and you'll need to be polite. Also, you'll need a date because there will be dancing." Her eyes are wide and pleading with me, "Please Rosalina. I really need you to come."

"A date?" I echo, "Can't I just bring Danielle? I haven't got anyone else to go with."

"Well, I've been speaking with Autumn and-

"Please say you didn't."

"Nothing's finalised," She reassures me, smiling slightly. "But Autumn is going to be there too, and Blayke will be required to attend. Eulyric might be a bit too young though. We just thought it was easier if you two went together, rather than having two different dates, per say. Plus, you two are close and we know that we can rely on you both to be sensible and act polite to our guests." \_Blayke? Sensible? I'd pay to see that. \_"We haven't asked Blayke yet; we wanted to get some confirmation off you first. Would you be okay with that?"

"It's not that I wouldn't be okay with it," I groan, "It's just that I haven't spoken to Blayke in a week and one day mom. He's ignoring me like I'm some kind of disease. I'm pretty sure it won't go down to well if he's asked to be my date to a country club."

"He's still being off with you?" Mom frowns, "Why?"

"Beats me. You can ask him if you want, but I'm steering well clear of that tool."

"Tool? What's happened?" Mom frowns, "Is there something you aren't telling me?"

\_Yes.\_

"No."

"Rosalinaâ€¦" She trails off, giving me a warning look, "Tell me what's happened."

"Nothing mom," I sigh, "It just hurts that the guy I like is ignoring me."

\_That wasn't so subtle, was it?\_

"I knew it!" She whoops, "I knew you liked him!" She stands up excitedly, cheeks flushed.

"Shut up! Are you forgetting that he lives less than three metres away from us, mom?! Be quiet!"

"Oh." Realisation crosses her face. "Sorry about that." She plays with her bracelet awkwardly for a second, but it's not long before the excitement returns. "But I'm so glad you like him, Rosalina! He's a lovely boy."

\_Lovely? About as lovely as a dead hippo's interglutal cleft, maybe.\_

"Whatever mom, he needs to sort things out with me and apologise."

"He will. Things will work themselves out sweetie, don't you worry." She kisses me on the forehead, "Now if you'll excuse me, I've got some paperwork to fill out. I'll have a word with Autumn about the country club issue—see if she can find out what Blayke thinks about taking you as a date." She pauses at the door for a second, glancing back at me with a cheeky grin, "I totally ship Rosayke." And then she exits the room, leaving me sat here with my jaw slackened on the floor. \_My mom ships us? I didn't even realise she knew what a ship was!\_

As if knowing what I'm thinking, mom shouts teasingly back to me. "I'm down with the kids, mofo!"

\_Face palm.\_

\_Preferably with a red hot,\_

\_searing\_

\_iron bar.\_

Ouch.

\* \* \*

><p><em><strong>Author Note: Yeah I know, I know. Not the best chapter in the world, but hey ho- I hope you like it anyway.<strong>\_

## 17. The Change

\_\*\*Ch 17: The Change\*\*\_

ã^...8 Blayke Moonlight ã^...8

"So Rosalina was texting me the other night," Toad states, shooting me a sharp look. "She said you haven't even acknowledged her presence all week. What's up with that brah? I thought you guys were friends." I shift uncomfortably at Toad's statement, my hands gripping the handles of the foosball players so tightly that the knuckles turn white. I don't meet his eye, of course. \_You need to stop ignoring her. You're going to lose her altogether if you do.\_ I stare furiously down at the foosball game as I try to concentrate, watching as Waluigi makes his shot, but my mind is focused elsewhere. \_Waluigi kissed her. Waluigi kissed Rosalina.\_

My brain needs to learn when to shut up.

I need to relax, to get her out of my mind for a bit because truthfully, she hasn't strayed far from it at any time this week. \_I can't get that damned kiss out of my head. It's freaking haunting me. \_Do you think she likes Waluigi? I glance up at him, assessing the angel blonde haired boy. At least I haven't heard that they're dating or anything. Maybe she doesn't like him back? Nothing's come from the kiss. Wellâ€¦not that I know of. I still don't feel comfortable talking to her though. Surely it's best if I stay away from her. It would help me get over her, right? It's not like I have a chance anyway: she thinks I'm annoying douche. Don't blame her to be perfectly honest.

Although I am an incredibly sexy annoying douche. That should boost me up some points.

"Dude," Luigi claps me on the back, frowning, "You just missed the prime opportunity to score. What's on your mind?" I sigh, relaxing the tense muscles in my back that are taut with stress. Why can't I get her out of my head? \_Because you like her dumbass, is that an obvious question? \_I grumble under my breath, stepping away from the foosball table to collapse on the couch. Toad looks up at me from his phone, frowning as he sees my disgruntled face.

\_Oh aren't the boys just full of concern today? The day I just want everyone to p\*\*\*off with their questions: I'm torturing myself enough as it is. I need a distraction.\_

"Come on dude, since when do we keep secrets?" Luigi crosses his arms on his chest, glaring at me. "You're acting like you've committed a freaking crime. Jeez, just tell us already. We're your best mates, and you've been a PMSing preteen all week." Joe nods from the opposite couch, supporting him. \_I'm not going to win this, am I? \_I swear a guy can never have his secrets anymore.

"I like her, alright?" I growl, shooting wy a piercing glare, "I like Rosalina Star."\_I'm not going to keep anything from my bros: we're like one big f\*cked up family.\_Unexpectedly though, after a second for the information to sink in, Luigi cheers loudly and beats his chest. "Toad- you owe me fifty big ones. Hand it over man."\_What? \_I look on confusedly as Toad curses, shooting me a glance before he fishes in his back pocket for his wallet. Meanwhile, Waluigi does the same. \_What the frick.\_ I watch the scene, outraged as it all sinks in.

"You guys \_gambled\_ on me?!"

"I prefer to think of it as a potential investment," Toad winks, "Which I just happened to lose. The other week we were betting on how long you would take to realise you had a crush on her. Luigi said two weeks. I said a month. Waluigi said longer." \_I want to frigging castrate these guys. \_They knew I liked Rosalina and they never told me? What happened to the bro-code? I'd like to ask Waluigi that very same question, actually. "Wait," I mutter, looking up at Waluigi, "So you kissed Rosalina, even though you knew I liked her? What the hell, man?"

"You kissed Rosalina?" Luigi turns to Waluigi, and Toad's jaw

drops at the news. \_Wow, this is like a freaking soap opera.\_ Waluigi

shifts uncomfortably under all of the accusing gazes, staring at his converse clad feet to avoid staring any of us in the eyes. "Yeah, I kissed her," He admits reluctantly, "Not like she kissed me back anyway. She doesn't like me like that. I'm sorry dude," He scratches the back of his neck awkwardly as he looks up at me; "It was an experiment. I have a small crush on herâ€¦I just wanted to see, I guess."

"Low move bro," I mutter, shaking my head. "Butâ€¦whatever. It's in the past. Gotta move on." Luigi raises his eyebrows at me and wipes a fake tear from his eye, as though he's impressed, and I scowl. \_What? I can be a good person you know.\_ If Rosalina was here, she'd scoff at that statement in the most unlady-like way possible but I need to get Rosalina out of my , one week after I realise I had a crush on her I've turned into an effing clingy girl is messing with my head, and she isn't even trying to.

"So," Luigi wriggles his eyebrows at me, sliding onto the couch "Rosalina Star, eh? Good catch there mate." I roll my eyes at him. Now that I've told him, I'll never hear the end of this, I can just tell. Luigi is just that kind of guy. I'm not going to moan about how she doesn't like me: guys just don't talk about stuff like that, despite Luigi's probing. I'm just going to nod my head until the whole subject blows over, because I really don't feel comfortable professing my crush on Rosalina and going into all the gory details. \_Definitely not. That would just be weird.\_

"Yup, and I would appreciate it if you guys would stop talking about her," I mutter lowly, glaring at my hands. "Can't you see I'm trying to get over her here? It's not like I want to have a crush on her: she thinks I'm a douche anyway."

"That's why you're ignoring her?!" Toad asks me incredulously, "Dude. There's no chance she'll like you back if you act like she doesn't exist! You're being a jerk- go and speak to her!"\_ Oh like he's such a love expert.\_

"Joe's right for the first time ever," Luigi nods his head, "Do you not want to date her or something? I mean, I'm no sap, but you guys are effing made for each other. You're giving up all of your hope by ignoring her: she'll never like you if you carry on like this." Luigi shakes his head thoughtfully, "Plus isn't that Marth guy her ex? What if he wants some more of her?" My fists tighten at the thought. I know what that pr\*ck did to her. She can do way better than him.

\_Why does Rosalina make everything so frigging confusing?\_ I groan and cover my eyes as I sink back into the couch. Even my friends think I'm doing the wrong thing. She thinks I'm a jerk, but we have moments where it's kind of like we're friends. We've got kind of a love-hate relationship going on, only replace the 'love' part with 'can just about stand each other'. The thing is, if I carry on ignoring her, I'm going to lose that part completely and we'll just carry on like we never met. Like I never stole her bra, and she never broke into my bedroom, and all that other shit that's happened since then. It will be sad to lose that. \_But you can get over her if you continue, Blayke. You can carry on living your bad boy bachelor days.\_

But eventually, even bad boys need to settle down a little bit.

"I hate you guys," I chuckle darkly, removing my hands from my eyes and standing up. "Quit messing with my head, would you? I've got enough shiz stirring up here to last a lifetime, I don't need any more." I sigh, "I'm going to go and talk to Rosalina. See if I can at least make up for some of my asshole qualities." I grab my hoodie, slide my phone into my pocket and head towards the stairs leading up from Waluigi's basement, ignoring the knowing expressions burning holes into my back.

"And they call it puppy loveeee," I hear Luigi sing to himself behind me, backed up with Toad's chuckling. It takes every muscle I have to ignore the instinct of turning around to thump them. \_I'll just wait until they get a crush. We'll see whose laughing then. \_I smirk to myself knowingly and swing op

en the front door. Rosalina might not forgive me, but it's at least worth a shot.

I watch her as she studies at her desk, and I'm unsure of quite how to approach the situation. Normally I'd just head over to my window seat and call her name casually before proceeding to annoy her, but I have the feeling that won't suffice this time. I probably need to soften her up a little bit first. After all, we haven't spoken in a week, and I've been a bit of an asshole to her. I shuffle awkwardly and run my hands through my hair, letting out a small sigh of apprehension. This is so awkward. She's going to think I'm desperate. A desperate jerk. "Hey Rosalina," I finally say, shoving my hands sheepishly in my back pockets as I walk to the windowsill.

I watch her head snap up to look at me, and an accusing glare is directed straight at me. "Oh so you're talking to me now then?" I wince at her sharp tone. My god, I'm such a coward. I can't even look Rosalina in the eye, for Christ's sake. I dare to take a look, but she's studiously ignoring me luckily, and my eyes run over her as she works. She's sat cosily in a pair of black and white striped cotton short pyjamas with some white fluffy slipper boots. No makeup and her hair is tied into a high ponytail, yet she still manages to look you know, \_good.\_ I guess that's why so many girls are jealous of her.

"Can we talk? I need to tell you something."

She lets out an irritated sigh as I climb onto my windowsill. I don't wait for a reply, obviously. Slowly I begin to clamber over into her room, stretching over the gap precariously. This is something I've been doing more and more often recently. Well, before the day at the beach anyway. "What do you want Blayke?" She sighs as I enter her room, and I head straight to her desk, leaning over her shoulder to see what she's studying. My hands rest on the top of her chair comfortably, and she freezes at the gesture. Math. I scrunch my nose up at the sight of the equations, stepping back to sit on the bed. "I'm sorry for ignoring you," I say awkwardly, scratching the back of my neck.

"Oh really?" Rosalina asks monotonously, carrying on studying as though I just told her the weather was nice, rather than putting my dignity on the line to apologise. I scowl at the back of her head. Does she not realise that guys don't apologise often? I mean I know I was an asshole to her, but she could at least \_acknowledge\_my



apology. Or is that exactly the point? Is she playing me at my own game? \_Ugh, smartass Star. \_ "Rosalina," I mumble uncomfortably, "I really am sorry. Talk to me, Star."

She hesitates, before spinning around in her chair and giving me a dubious look. "You're a son of a biscuit," She states simply, "And a grasshole. And every other name I can't think of right now. But I'll forgive you out of the loveliness of my heart." She catches my smile beginning to grow, cutting it off with a mischievous smirk. "On one condition."

"What?" Suspicion is beginning to set in now. What is she planning?

"I need you to come with me for something," She bites her lip, her sudden mischievous aura morphing into a doubtful and insecure anxiety. "You've heard about that evening at the country club, right? Well, do you know that our mom's want us to go together? Apparently we need a dateâ€¦ Anyway, do you think you could come with me? I haven't really got anyone else to go with, plus you're going anywayâ€¦" As she spots my growing smirk, she hurriedly covers up. "This is not me asking you out on a date by the way. This is just to make my mom happy."

"Oh sure," I wink, "Just for your mom. Well I must say, it's not a common occurrence that I get asked out on a date by a girl. Usually they're desperate enough to skip that part just for the sex. But if you're willing to go that extra mile just for me, I'm not going to refuseâ€¦"

>"Shut up," She defends, leaning over to swat me on the chest, "You owe me, Blayke Moonlight. All we have to do is try not to rip each other's throats out for one night, okay? Just for my mom."<p>

"I roll my eyes dramatically, "Your mom loves me: no wonder she asked you to take me out. She probably just wanted to drool over me all night. I guess I'll have to go."

"That's my mom you're talking about," Rosalina wrinkles her nose, disgusted, "Ew."

"It is. Try not to get too jealous though. I can assure you that cougars aren't my type," I wink at her, "The younger models are more my kind of thing." \_My god, I'm flirting with her.\_ Jeez, what the hell am I doing? She already thinks I'm a pervert, now she's going to think I'm a creep too. Way to make an impression, Blayke. Before she can comment on me hitting on her, I hastily reach into my pocket for the paper bag, chucking it at her. Oh look at that, guess I'm giving her the bracelet now.\_Well here goes nothing.\_

"This was something I bought at the beach," I grimace, "It's kind of an apology gift now though."

Rosalina's mouth pops open softly, and she looks down at the small paper bag in her hands. "Is it a stink bomb? Poison? Are you trying to kill me?" She looks up at me, squinting suspiciously. \_Trust her to think that I'm trying to kill her.\_

"None of the above. Just open it Rosalina."

>Cautiously, she opens up the bag and the bracelet slides onto her palm. My chest constricts as I watch her reaction. <em>I shouldn't

have given it to her. She's going to think I'm a creep. <em>Her jaw lapses as she registers what the gift is, and she looks up at me with wide and happy eyes. "Thank you- it's beautiful!" A breath I didn't even realise I was holding is released. \_She likes it. She doesn't think I'm a creep.\_She unclasps the bracelet and slides it onto her wrist, attempting to do it up one handed.

"Let me do it," I roll my eyes, "Little miss impatient." I take her wrist in my hands and with fumbly fingers, do up the clasp over her porcelain skin. \_I'm acting like it's a bloody ring. It's no big deal: it's a six dollar bracelet that I brought from a surf shack. \_I need to stop acting like I'm living in a romance story. Grow a pair and man up, Moonlight.

"Oh shush little Mr Sensitive," Rosalina jokes, "Aren't I a lucky girl? I expect another week of you ignoring me, but instead I get an apology and a cute bracelet. What's happening to you Moonlight? Since when did you become such a sappy thing?" Her voice is light and teasing, and I know that she's forgiven me, which is kind of a relief. Plus at the moment, she's not growling at me like she wants to rip my head off. I should buy her stuff more often.

She has a point though. The old Blayke Moonlight would never do something like this. She's changing me. Whether it's for the better or the worse, I don't know. "Shut up Star," I roll my eyes, "I've still got your bra, I hope you realise."

\_Yep. Still got her bra, and already planning my next prank. Oh this should be fun.\_

\_ã^•7 ROSALINA STAR ã^•7\_

"Are you freaking kidding me?" I stare blankly at the couple making out on Danielle and I's table as I head towards it, my lunch clutched firmly in my hand so that I don't drop my precious food. We decided not to go to the library today, for a change, and this is what I find waiting for me?! Violet breaks off with geek guy as she registers my voice.

"Oh hey Rosalina. Meet DK. DK this is Rosalina." She looks up at the swollen-lipped nerdy parasite with gooey eyes and I have to fight the urge to gag. \_Oh this is disgusting.\_ I never thought Danielle would be one for public displays of affection, but hey, she's already leaning in to kiss him again. Way to make me feel like a third wheel. I clear my throat loudly as I sit down, but the couple ignore me as they continue to feed off each other's faces. Pauline's hands run through his hair, and their faces are pressed so tightly together that his glasses have twisted awkwardly across his cheekbones. \_Fun lunchtime for me then.\_ I mutter profanities under my breath, taking my orange juice bottle and gulping down some of the liquid as

I glance around the cafeteria awkwardly. I don't know where to look. If I look at them for too long, I'll just be that awkward creep that won't stop staring. Not to mention that it'll put me off my food.

"You look lonely," Toad's voice laughs from nearby, and I spin around- grateful for the distraction. Luigi and Waluigi trail behind Toad and Blayke, and I watch as they all focus on my situation, laughs escaping their perfectly sculptured lips. \_I'm surprised these

guys don't model for Calvin Klein or something. \_It almost hurts my eyes to have that much perfect all in one place.

"Poor Rosalina," Blayke snorts, "She's not getting any action."

I shoot him an icy glare which just makes him laugh more. Toad slides into the seat beside me, and I turn to him surprised. \_Well at least I won't look like a loner anymore. Luigi\_ sits opposite me, next to Geek guy, and Blayke slides in on my other side, whilst Waluigi drags up a chair. Almost immediately, I can feel the whole of the student body zone onto us. \_Ah. The downsides of sitting with the most popular guys in school. \_I can see girls whispering, and guys pointing inconspicuously and I feel more and more uncomfortable by the second. Meanwhile, the boys laugh with each other completely obliviously. \_How do they not notice?\_ Maybe they've gotten used to it? I wrinkle my nose thoughtfully. I don't think I could ever get used to it, personally.

"Er, hi," Luigi says awkwardly to the happy couple, his nose wrinkled and hand waving to try and get their attention. Danielle pulls back instantly, her face flushing red as her and DK shuffle away from each other awkwardly. She shoots me a look, but I just shrug. \_What? I wasn't going to stop them from sitting here. \_It's not my fault if she was too busy playing tonsil tennis with her nerdy boyfriend.

"Hi, I'm Danielle," She introduces herself to the boys, not shy at all like I would be. "Rosalina's punky and all round amazing best friend. Nice to meet you." How she does that astounds me—I would be terrified. I watch the boys' reactions closely, and they seem a little awkward and intimidated by her appearance. To be honest, she terrified me too when I first met her. That thick kohl eyeliner and newly dyed red spiky hair is enough to cause anyone to take a second look. I think that's what she's aiming for though: she's bold and she has enough confidence to be like that, whereas I really don't. Without the makeup, she's practically an alien to me now.

"Hi," Joe smiles a little awkwardly, "Waluigi and I have seen you before, yeah? The angry chick by Rosalina's locker." I chuckle at the way he explains it, remembering the memory fondly. I hadn't told Pauline about the bra incident, and she was angry at me, pestering me to tell her. Toad and Waluigi had been stood watching us so awkwardly. It's funny to me now, although at the time I was just plain scared that she was going to boil my insides. She would've done that, if I hadn't have gone into such detail of the story in math. \_Good times, good times.\_

"That's me," She laughs, "The crazy chick." Waluigi cracks a smile at this, although Luigi and Blayke are exchanging strange glances. \_I forgot that they weren't there.\_

"So DK," I say, winking at Danielle. "How long have you liked my best friend?"

>"Um, I think I'm going to go," Martin flushes red, standing up from the table and escaping as quickly as possible, barely pausing to even say goodbye to Danielle, despite the face-feasting session they had previously shared. Danielle groans as he darts away, turning to me with an accusing glare. "You scared him off Rosalina!"<br>"Really? I was pretty sure it was Blayke's face that scared him off," I roll my eyes at the grinning boy beside me, turning back to Danielle. "But

then again, it could have been yours."

"Is he not adorable though?"

I'm about to reply with another snarky comment, but Waluigi cuts me off with a chuckle. "I have the feeling we're interrupting girl talk, guys. I kind of want to hea

r the gossip though."

"Yeah, tell us the gossip babes," Toad leans in eagerly, teasing us, and I swat him playfully.

Feeling my eyes on my back, I freeze before turning around to survey the scene. Marth walks past us a few metres behind, and his eyes are locked onto mine. \_Not this again. \_Why will he not leave me alone? Have I not made it absolutely crystal clear that I want nothing to do with him?! Blayke stiffens beside me, so I'm guessing he's seen too, and then he slowly slings an arm around my shoulder which makes Marth's eyes narrow. \_Uh oh, not another dominance fight.\_ I turn back to face the table, glad to see that Danielle and the boys are too busy disputing Werewolves vs Vampires to notice the focus of Blayke and I's attention. \_How did they change subject so quickly? \_After a second, Blayke turns back to face the front as well, although his demeanour has definitely changed. His arms slides slowly from my shoulders, and I miss the warm buzz of comfort that it brought.

"Are you kidding me? Werewolves are so much better!" Danielle argues, "I mean take Edward Cullen as an example. \_He sparkles.\_ That's hardly big-bad vampire material is it? That dude has ruined the reputation of vampires. Werewolves are so much hotter, plus the whole full moon thing just makes them so much cooler too." \_I agree. I mean, have these guys not seen the Teen Wolf actors? Drool.\_  
>"What about Dracula?" Waluigi retorts, shaking his head. "Dracula is a legend, one of the classics. You don't see any classic werewolf stories do you? Vampires have been around so much longer."  
<br>"Exactly!" Luigi argues, "Vampires are old man. Werewolves are fresh." He slaps the table to emphasise his point, as though he's just ended the debate, which makes me laugh.

"Excuse me," A voice interrupts our debate, and I look to the side to see a pretty brunette girl stood there, hand on her hip and flanked by a petite blonde. The brunette wears a pair of incredibly skinny jeans and a short top, revealing her belly. Not one of Peach's minions, I don't think, but almost at that level. "Hi," She smiles at Blayke, fluttering her thickly mascaraed eyelashes, "I just wanted to give you my number, because you seem like a really nice guy."

>What? That's the stupidest thing I've ever way does she want to give Blayke her number because he looks like a <em>nice guy. <em> She pauses to flick her hair behind her shoulder, leaning in towards him seductively. "I'm free tonight if you want to come aroundâ€|?" She murmurs quietly. I snort quietly to restrain my sarcastic remark. I'm sorry, but just how obvious can you get? We all know what she said, judging by Toad's eye roll and Luigi's irritated sigh. \_He must get this a lot.\_ Why do I feel a twinge of jealousy when I think that?

"Er no thanks," Blayke coughs, blushing a little, and I think we all

turn to stop and stare. Blayne Moonlight\_ is denying a hook up?\_What the hell is up with him?!

"Your loss," The girl leans back, her flirty aura turning cold and angry as she flounces away with the blonde girl in tow. Meanwhile, I'm still choking on my saliva from what Blayne said. \_Is he serious? \_He's probably already got a hook up booked- that's got to be it, right?

>"I'm sorry but did I just hear that right?" Toad questions him, mouth agape, "You're denying a hook up?" <em>Well at least I know I wasn't imagining things now, and that Blayne actually did just deny a hot girl.<em>

"Dude," Luigi coughs out a laugh, leaning over the table to slap Blayne on the forearm, "When was the last time you got laid?" Do I really want to know this? I share a look with Danielle, wrinkling my nose.

"Blayne's not getting any," Toad sings, laughing and I chuckle quietly along with him.

"Shut up," Blayne mutters, blushing the tiniest bit. "I got laid last night for your information."

><em>Lie. <em>Last night, after Blayne gave me the bracelet, we talked for a bit longer before he went back home. He was studying: I know it myself, because he kept making teasing remarks at me through the phone. He's lying to them, jerk face.

"Well I don't know about you guys," Waluigi smirks, "But I don't believe him."

><em>What the hell is up with Blayne?!<em>

"Hey Rosalina."

"What?" I look across the window at Blayne, frowning. He's lying on his side on his window seat, wriggling his eyebrows at me mischievously. \_He does that a lot, and usually that means he's up to something.\_ What's he planning?

"You must be tired after everything we did in my dream last night," He winks.

\_Oh no. \_"Not this again."

"You and I are like buttcheeks. Although there's crap between us, we always stick together."

>"Oh my god," I face palm, laughing loudly. <em>These keep getting better and better.<em>

"Can I borrow a kiss? I promise I'll give it back."

"Shut up Blayne," I laugh, "Please. You're going to give me a stitch."

"Let's play Winnie the Pooh. Let me get my nose stuck in your honey jar."

I can't even muster up words for this one, I'm laughing so hard.

"Do you work in Subway? Because you just gave me a foot long."

On second thoughts, maybe Blayke hasn't changed that much after all.

I watch Blayke move around in the opposite room, my stomach wringing itself with nerves as he continues obliviously. \_I need to tell someone. I can't keep this in for much longer. \_I glance down at the lock screen for my phone. The message is still printed in bold letters, a notification I'd rather not receive. \_Marth\_ \_Charlton wants to be friends with you on Facebook. \_\_Why won't it disappear? Is it just me or is it lasting longer than any of my other notifications? \_My palms are sweating, and I slowly wipe them on my jeans.

I'm going to tell Blayke. It's the right thing to do: I need to tell someone after all these years of bottling it up inside of me. Danielle knows most of the story, but not quite all of it. She knows the basic outline of everything that happened. I'm planning on calling her around after school to tell her in more detail, but for now I just want to see how this works out first.

I don't know why I'm telling Blayke to be honest. I'm being the worst best friend in the whole world by not telling Danielle first, but she knows most of it anyway. Plusâ€¦I don't know, there's an instinct inside of me that wants to tell Blayke.

I want to tell him about what happened. Every gory detail. I need to get this out in the open with him, because I don't want him to find out in any way other than from my lips. I really, really like him.

"Blayke," I call roughly, catching his attention. "I need to tell you something." My voice cracks on the last word.

\_I need to tell you the whole story.\_

## 18. Time for the whole Story

\_\*\*Ch 18: Time for the whole Story\*\*\_

"I need to tell you the whole story."

Blayke knows what I mean instantly, and his eyes widen at my nervously intertwined fingers. Cautiously, he comes up to his window and clambers out into the night, whilst I lean back to sit on the bed. \_I can't believe I'm doing this. Imagine what he'll think.\_ I take a dry gulp as Blayke finally manages to clamber through my window, and he approaches me slowly as though he's afraid I'll snap at him or start crying or something. \_I am so unpredictable to him. \_"It's okay," I reassure him, "You can sit down if you want." Blayke says nothing as he takes a seat, and I can't deny that I'm surprised that he knew that I didn't want him to say anything. \_At least he's being sensitive about this. He probably knows it's a big deal to me.\_

"A short year after I was born," I clear my throat, "My mum got pregnant with a baby girl."

\_Shut up. Tell him to get out. Do you really want to tell him

this?\_

"She was gorgeous and healthy, with ten tiny fingers and ten tiny toes, and my parents completely adored her. They named her Heaven." I let out a breath. \_There's no going back now. It's out in the open.\_ I knit my fingers together before continuing into the story, sitting on my hands to stop them from shaking. "Heaven and I grew up as two quite different healthy children. Both quite small and slight, only I had auburn ringlets inherited from mom and she had my father's mousy brown locks. We both had bright blue eyes, which is why people said that we looked alike, despite our hair colours."

"The third child was Mario. He was born when I was eight, and Heaven was seven. I'd like to say that we were the three closest siblings that the world had ever seen, but unfortunately that wasn't the case. All siblings fight, and our case was no different. Kaitlin and I both had asthma, and Mario had a nut allergy, but other than that we were all completely healthy. Seemingly perfect kids." I close my eyes in preparation for the next part. \_I don't think I can do this.\_ "Four years after Mario was born, my sister got lung cancer. She was eleven at the time."

I hear Blayke's sharp intake of breath, and it's enough to bring tears to my eyes with the memories that flood over me, but I suck it back in. \_I don't want to break down.\_ Be strong, Rosalina. Be strong for her. "We didn't know when it first began- because most cases don't really experience many symptoms at the beginning. Besides, she had asthma anyway which made it hard to tell a difference. We were alerted to it when Heaven got a coughâ€|it lasted for weeks on end. She was constantly breathless and we took her to the Doctor, who said that she simply had a mild chest infection. He gave us some tablets for her, and shrugged her off. He was wrong."

"In the third week, my mom took Heaven to the hospital. They examined her and I think when they heard that the prescribed tablets hadn't been working, they realised that something worse was wrong with Kaitlin. They ran some scans, and the doctor came back in with a grave expression on his face. I remember it like it was yesterday. He told me that there was a nurse outside handing out sweets to the kids in the ward, and for me to bring Mario to go and get some. When I came back in, my parents were sobbing." I swallow roughly, ignoring Blayke's eyes on my face. \_Be strong.\_ "They said that the tumour was smallâ€|it had only been there a month, which made it easier for us to combat it because it was young. Heaven simply smiled sadly when she heard the newsâ€|it was like she already expected it. And for a twelve year old girl who thought she was going to lose her sister; that only made me cry harder."

I let loose a breath I didn't even realise I was holding, clenching my fingers together for support.

"Heaven responded to the treatment for remarkably well. The medication she took meant that she was weak, but able to do a lot of things. She still had all her hair, and she was happy. The only thing that ever reminded me that she did in fact have cancer was when she'd cough up bloodâ€|Mom would say the same thing every time. 'Rosalina, be a good girl and go and play with Mario. Mommy's having a talk with Heaven's. Of course, I knew that it wasn't just a talk and I think Mario did too. We heard the sounds, and the soothing words but we carried on playing together anyway. We were terrified of the

truthâ€|that sometimes despite how well she looked, she was deceptively ill."

I swallow my dry saliva, assessing my dry cheeks. \_I can do this. C'mon Rosalina, just a little bit further.\_

"Every few weeks, sometimes more, Heaven would miss a day of school to go for a check-up at the hospital so they could monitor the tumour and its size. For a year, it stayed the roughly the same. We thought she was going to be okay, "I choke out the last word. "Do you remember when I said Marth was my childhood sweetheart? My best friend?"

Blayke nods.

"Well he wasn't just mine. Marth, Heaven and Iâ€|well we were inseparable, to say the least. The three musketeers. ClichÃ©, I know, but true. Heaven and I, we both had crushes on Marth. He was seemingly perfect. Even when Heaven was in hospital, we'd bring our games and stuff and play them on her hospital bed to cheer her up. In the end thoughâ€|he chose me. Heaven didn't mind that much, although she might have been playing it off to hide her true feelings. So it was Marth and I, and her. But it never separated us. He was stupid. He should've chosen her, I know."

One look at Blayke's fisted hands, and I know he's thinking of Marth and what he did to me. I grab one of his hands in my shaking one, squeezing on his wrist for comfort. \_I need to tell someone. I need to let this out. \_Most of all, I need Blayke to be there for me for this next part.

"A few months before her fourteenth birthday, she had to drop out of school. Her condition had become severe, with the tumour spreading to her blood system and heart. We knew she only had limited time left, and we tried to spend it wisely with her. She could've had chemotherapy, but we couldn't afford some of the extreme treatment that she needed. Besides, she didn't want it- she insisted that she was ready, and she was happy. This was last year," I wring my hands, my eyes crinkling in agony. "She died a week after her fourteenth birthday, on the tenth of March. I was fifteen, and Mario was seven."

Blayke's small intake of breath alerts me back out of my daze, and I'm suddenly aware of the water that's spilled from my eyes despite me trying to be strong. \_It's a raw wound. She died last year.\_ "Hey," He murmurs, wrapping his arms around me to enclose me into a firm hug. Telling him has opened up some old wounds, and I let out a strangled sob as I bury myself in his arms. He smells like vanilla, and cologne and it's mouth-watering, but I can't concentrate on that right now. What happened to being strong? I guess that went out of the window, but who can blame me really?

"You know the rest," I pull back, wiping my eyes to rid myself of the tears stinging my cheeks. I daren't look Blayke in the eye, I'm so humiliated. "Dad had already left just after Jack was born, but he was notified. He came to the funeral, and said his goodbyes. His monthly visits weren't enough, and he knew that, I could see it from the guilt in his eyes. The look of shameâ€|I'll never forget it." I grit my teeth as the image enters my head. "I'm not going to say something stupid like I didn't cry, because that would definitely not



be true. I took the hit hard, as did mom and Mario and Marth. So he cheated on me and got a girl pregnant by the age of sixteen. Then he moved away to the Wind Kingdom nine months ago, leaving me and my shattered heart behind."

I chuckle bitterly. "Now he's back, and after nine months of me, mum and Mario trying to avoid the topic because it hurts so much less, he's brought all those memories back. He wants another chance," I mutter, "But he should've chosen her."

He should've chosen her.

"I don't know what to say," Blayke says quietly, "Thank you for telling me. And Rosalina? I'm so sorry about your sister, and Marth. Those are things that a sixteen year old girl should never have to go through. You've probably heard this a million times. But I'm glad you opened up to me. Shit, I suck at long speeches," He chuckles dryly, "Just hang on. We'll keep you away from Marth. Heaven died happily, and she loved you. Don't ever feel guilty about Marth. That's his problem, not yours."

"Thank you for listening," I reply quietly, chuckling slightly. "Sorry for getting tears on your shirt. It was a good job I'm not wearing mascara, isn't it?" My dull attempt of humour sucks, but Blayke feigns a laugh anyway. It was good that I got that off my chest. I feel relieved? No, that's not the word. I don't know how to describe it, but it's just lighter. I'd had that holed up in my chest for a very long time and trusting somebody like that makes me feel loved. I knew Blayke wouldn't be a jerk about it, I never even thought for a second that he would, but seeing his reactions to my heartfelt confessions just proves it even more. There's something inside Blayke Moonlight a warmth, below the shell of cocky bad boy, that's slowly coming out. Blayke's changing as I get to know him better, and slowly I'm getting to see more and more of the sweetheart coming out, not the bad boy.

And so far? I like what I see.

"What have you got first?" I ask Blayke conversationally as we walk into school together, clutching my folder to my chest. My hair is thrown up into a braided bun, and a few loose strands tickle my ear playfully. I know what you're thinking. Since when do I make an effort? Well the simple answer to that would be that my mom did it, and I thought it looked nice. Well that was until she made a silly remark about me trying to impress Blayke, that is. No girly gossip time for her this evening, patronising son of a barnacle.

"I have media," Blayke replies smoothly, adjusting his back pack. A beanie rests on his curls, and honestly? This boy is like the freaking surface of the sun hot wearing that thing. It's making it very hard to concentrate. \_I love guys in beanies. \_I nod my head, humming a little under my breath as we join the crowd entering the front doors. I got a ride in with Blayke today, but I had the common sense not to question him this time. If he doesn't mind embarrassing his reputation for me, then I'm going to take full advantage of that fact. I breathe a sigh of relief as we escape the crowd, and automatically we begin heading to my locker. I think I spend too much time with this guy- he seems to know my daily schedule better than I do. I didn't even realise he knew where my locker was.

As we enter the corridor where my locker is, Blayke suddenly stiffens beside me and grabs my forearm in a deathly tight grip. It takes me a few seconds to realise why. Standing by my locker is Marth Carlton, his radiant blond hair shining above all others in the corridor. Right next to him, talking carelessly with him is Toad. \_Does that mean Toad doesn't know what Marth did to me? \_Surely he wouldn't be talking so casually with Marth if he did. I frown. "C'mon Rosalina. Let's end this once and for all," Blayke growls under his breath, tugging me forwards towards my locker. \_Oh crap, oh crap- I don't want a confrontation. Please. \_Judging by the anger radiating off Blayke in thick waves though, it's pretty obvious I'm going to get one.

"Excuse me," I say politely, dodging between the two boys to reach my locker. I'm acting calmly as I get my books for the day, but in all honesty my hands are shaking. \_Please don't confront him Blayke.\_ I wish Pauline were here, she'd have all three guys calmed down and out of my way within the minute. She's just really good with people.

"Blayke Moonlight," Marth greets, "Nice to meet the subject of all the rumours." \_What is he doing? Does he have a death wish?\_ Anybody who knows anything about Blayke knows that they shouldn't taunt him when he's angry, which he so obviously is.

"Marth Charlton," Blayke replies, voice laced with venom. "I'd say it was nice to meet you too but that would be a lie. So, just moved here from Wind Kingdom, huh? Was it the escape you needed?" Marth's eyes flicker to mine, and I stare defiantly back at him. Marth must have realised that I told Blayke, because of flicker of anger crosses his features. He has no right to be angry, though. It was my choice to tell Blayke what happened. Marth doesn't deserve a say in what I get to tell my friends about the incident.

"Rosalina," Marth mutters lowly, "Please can I talk to you for a second? \_Alone?\_" He sounds angry, but I'm not going to react to it. I don't care what he thinks.

"Sorry but I'm not interested Marth," I say through gritted teeth, "Get away from me."

"Rosalina \_please.\_ I try and I try to win you back, and nothing's good enough. I can't believe you told him!" He grabs my arm harshly and yanks me towards him, making me stumble. \_What the hell does he think he's doing?! \_Before I've even had time to blink, Blayke rips his hand back from my skin, and the two boys step forward face to face to glare each other in the eye. \_Oh crap, oh crap, oh crap.\_ This is not working out well.

"She said to get away from her," Blayke hisses. His eyes are stormy and deep now, the angriest I've ever seen, and the muscles prominent in his arms are as taut as live wires. Marth is holding a similar position. One wrong move, and the whole mining field blows up.

"Guys, take a chill pill okay?" Toad grimaces, attempting to separate the pair. Even with his muscles though, it makes no difference to the two conflicting jerk wads facing each other off right now. Until now, Toad has just been watching the scene confusedly, but the

testosterone and violence thick in the air must have alerted him to his senses. I step up behind Toad, leaning over to pat Blayke's arm. His gaze flickers to mine quickly but he ignores my pleading expression, focusing back on Marth again. \_Jerk.\_

"I'm going to get her back again," Toby spits at Blayke, "Just you wait and see."

"You don't deserve her!"

And with that, Marth throws the first punch. Almost immediately, a crowd begin to form, chanting 'fight' at the top of their lungs. Meanwhile, I watch in horror as the fight digresses. Blayke dodges Marth's punch easily, stepping out of the way like he's practiced it a million times. "Is that all you can do?" He teases cockily, raising his fists up in a defensive position. Marth's jaw sets determinedly at the taunt, and he dives for another punch but Blayke dodges once again. I can hear the audible dreamy sigh of the girls in the crowd right now, and to be honest, I think I was one of them. \_Blayke's protecting me.\_

"Tut tut, I'd have thought you knew how to throw a better punch than that pretty boy," Blayke grins, winking at me out of the corner of his eye. At this point, despite my previous worries about whether he'll be okay or not, I come to realise that Blayke can handle himself incredibly well on the battlefield and I should quit acting like the worried mother, and start acting more like the damsel in distress that Blayke wants me to be. My smile spreads from ear to ear, appreciating Blayke's warped form of kindness, and the only thing that's worrying me is that I hope Blayke doesn't mess Marth's face up too badly. Yeah, he may be a jerk, but we were best friends and I don't want him to die or anything.

After a minute more of taunting and dodging, Marth finally manages to land a weak punch to Blayke's jaw. It's hard enough to leave a bruise, but I think everybody knows that Blayke has got away lightly with this. Blayke beams at Marth before he finally goes for the punch that everyone has been waiting for. He lands a perfectly square, lightning fast hit to Marth's jaw and an audible wince spreads through the crowd at the impact. Marth drops to the floor, and Blayke smirks victoriously. "You made the hit first dude, which means that the school can't suspend me. My punch was self-defence."

I seriously want to kiss him right now.

I rush up to him and attack him into a hug, feeling his arms wrap around my back as I cheer loudly. "Dude," I grin, "I'm not usually one for playing damsel in distress, but that was awesome!"

Blayke winks, "What can I say? I'm just pure awesome. You can thank me later for kicking his ass."

"Clear the way!" Mr. Toadstool, the principal, bellows loudly, footstep echoes ricocheting down the hall. His four chins are flushed crimson, his face scrunched in anger. He looks like a bull frog. I snort a laugh as people dash away left right and centre to escape his wrath. \_Cowards.\_ "Get to lessons, all of you!" He barks, grabbing Blayke and Marth by the arms. His eyes narrow on me. "You three, come with me. I need to have a talk with all of you." Once the hallway has cleared and everybody has gone to lesson, Blayke, Marth and I follow

Mr. Toadstool to the principal's office- each with very different expressions. Where's Blayke is smug with victory, mine is hedged with the tiniest amount of anticipation. Do you think they'll call my mom? It's not even like I was involved in the fight!

Marth just looks humiliated, a deep red colour staining his cheeks as he clutches his jaw. He won't meet my eye, but that's a good thing. Maybe he'll finally back off now.

"Take a seat in my office," Mr. Toadstool orders, "Hurry up!"

Hurriedly, I sit down on one of the cracked leather seats, not wanting to get into even more trouble. Blayke and Marth sit either side of me, and Mr. Toadstool strolls behind his desk, looking each of us in the eye in turn. "One of you," He says quietly, "Explain what happened." He sits down.

Blayke's and Marth's voices instantly begin to clamber over each other in the fight for Mr. Toadstool's attention, but I just sigh, slapping both of them on the arm to shut them up. Honestly? Do they think we're going to be out of here quickly with both of them doing that?

"This is what happened, with no biased opinions," I shoot a glare at both of the boys, before focusing on Mr. Toadstool, crossing my legs in the seat calmly.\_ Let the girl take control.\_ Mr. Toadstool stares curiously back at me, obviously eager to hear the backing story and find his victim for detention. "As you probably know, Marth recently moved here, and he happens to be an ex of mine," I begin. Marth stiffens beside me. "He threatened me this morning, and grabbed my arm, hurting me. Blayke stepped in, and before I knew it both boys were in a face down. Marth made the first punch, and if you consulted the security cameras then you'd see that I am in fact telling the truth."

"Thankyou, Miss Star," Mr Boston nods, "I have no doubt that your story was an accurate representation. Mr Charlton, may I please ask for the reason why you even thought about laying a hand on Miss Star? I'm quite sure you had no intentions to hurt her."

"In the politest way possible, Mr. Toadstool, I'd prefer to withholding that information."

"Right then," Mr. Toadstool leans forward in his chair, "Then I will be forced to bring you in for two weeks' worth of after school detention for assault against \_two\_ pupils, Mr Charlton. Miss Star, you obviously had no real part in this worth punishing so you may leave. Mr Moonlight, you will receive five lunchtime detentions for punching another student, although I can't bring you in for any more, seeing as it seems that it was in fact self-defence." He grumbles a little under his breath, sitting back and dismissing us with one hand.

"Thankyou sir," I nod respectfully, standing up from my seat, with Blayke following suit. Besides me, Marth is shaking with rage, still sat down with his fists gripping the arms of the chair. \_Uh oh.\_

"You don't understand though!" He protests, "Blayke Moonlight is

interfering in places where he's not allowed to interfere! He punched me back!" I roll my eyes at his outburst. \_Seriously?\_ What does he think he's going to achieve by arguing, other than another detention?

"Cool story bro," Blayke snarls, "Wanna hear mine? Once upon a time, nobody gave a fu-"

"Blayke Moonlight, please exit the office! I will deal with Marth," Mr. Toadstool reassures him, "Now get to your lessons." I nod and grab Blayke's arm firmly, tugging him out of the office before he can get himself in even more trouble. I march out of there quickly, hearing Blayke chuckle behind me.

"Whoa sweetheart, easy there. I mean I know you're eager to get me alone but calm down."

"You wish Blayke," I roll my eyes, letting go of his arm.

"I really do."

"You're such a jerk."

"A sexy, charming, debonair jerk," He grins cockily, a shallow dimple showing in his cheek. \_The beanie, the dimple—it's just too much. Too much.\_ I glance to the side, feeling a gaze on my face.

Peach stands outside of the principal's office, a cold and icy glare focused on me.

Well you know what? She can kiss my ass.

End  
file.